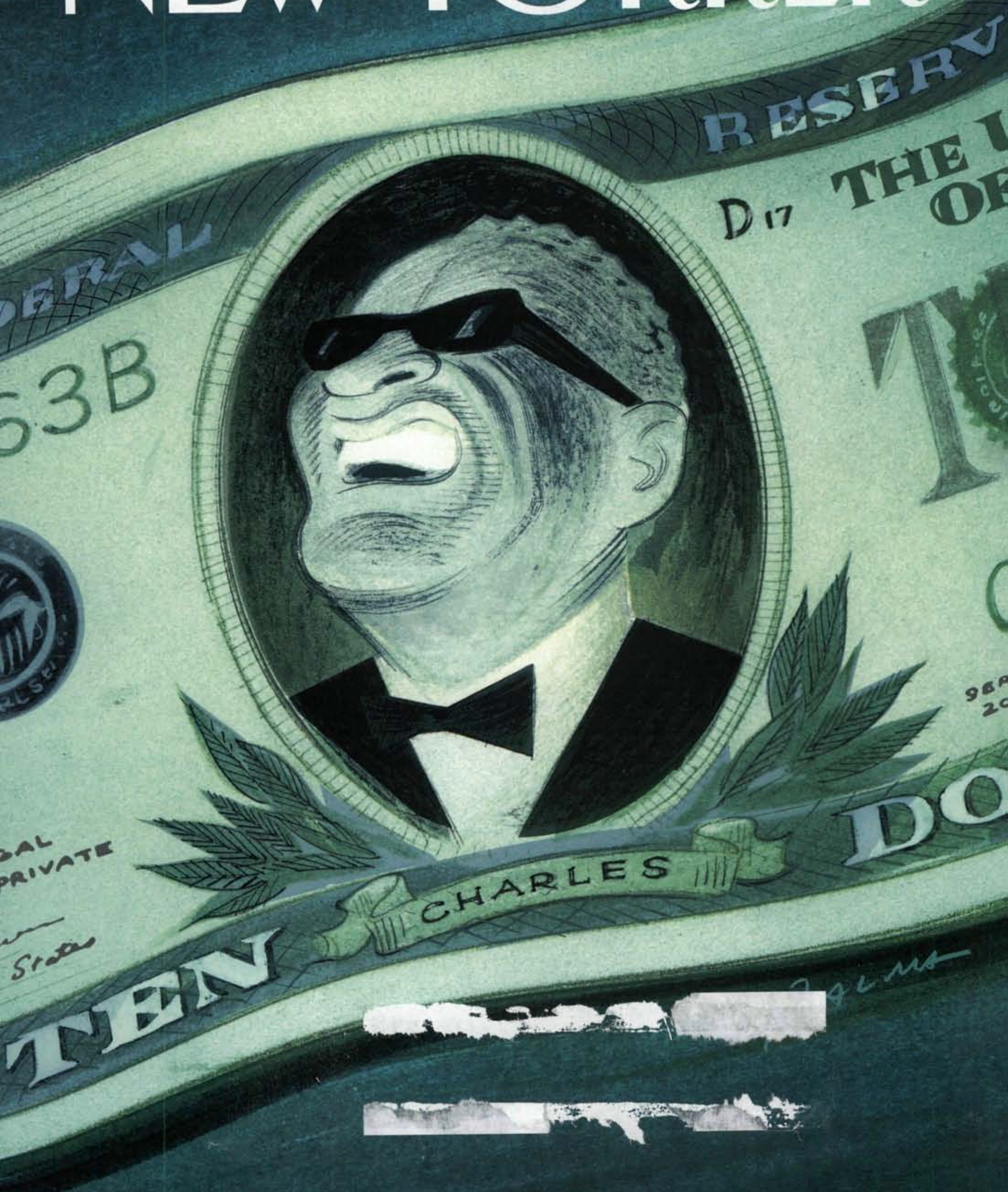
PRICE $3.95 JUNE 28, 2004

# THE NEW YORKER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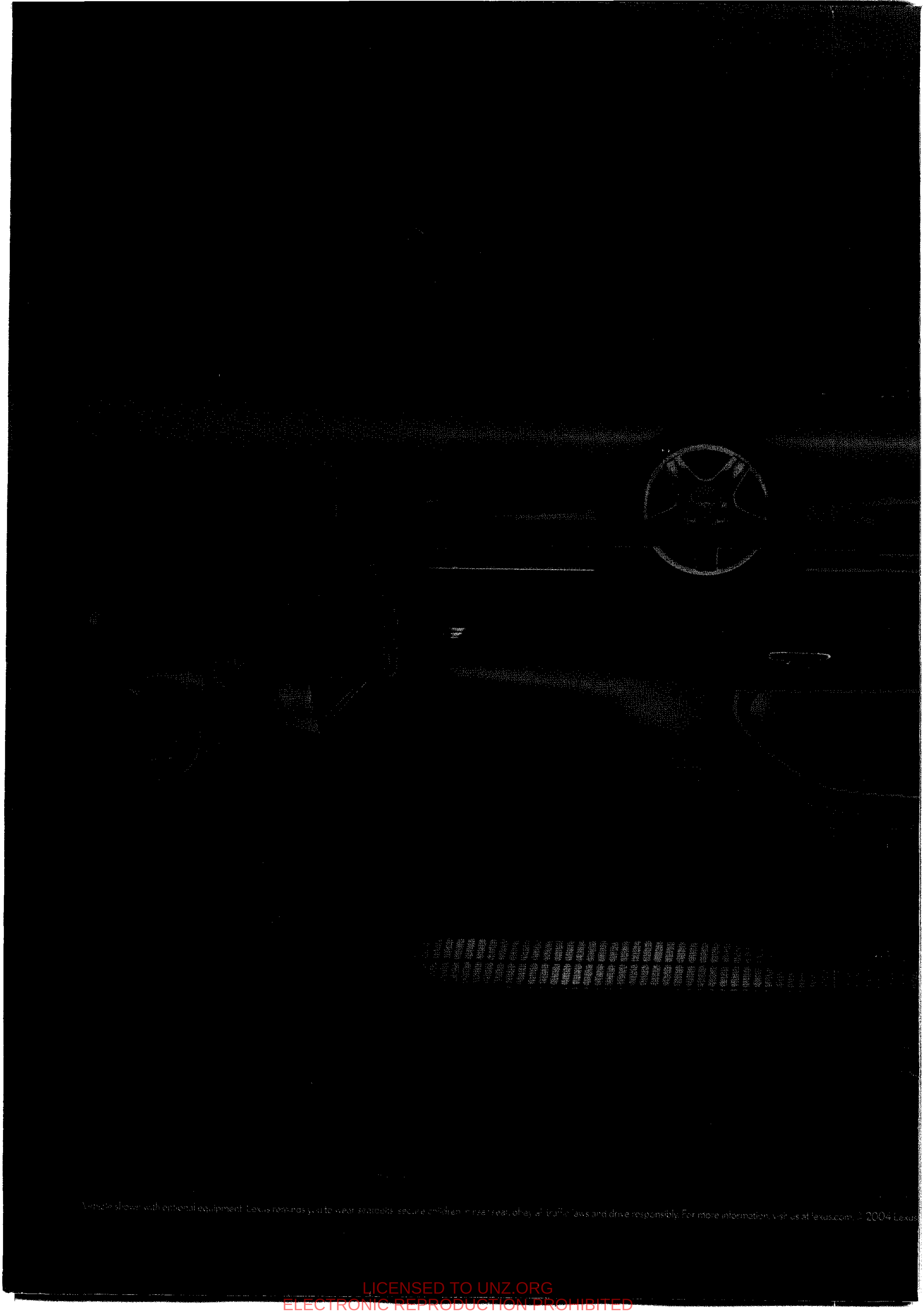

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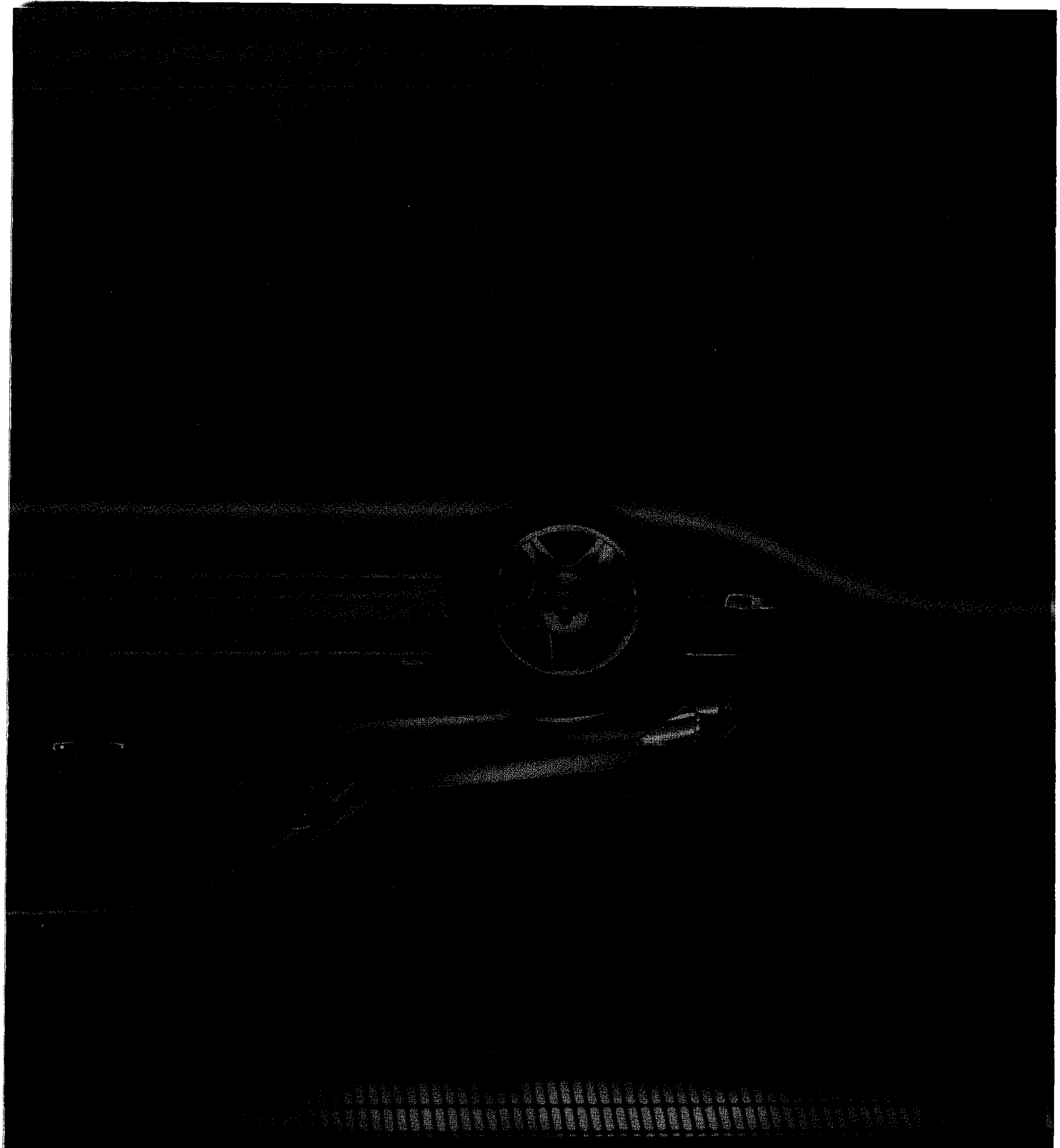

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It has occurred to us that before you say *cześć*—or, if you prefer English to Polish greetings, *hello*—to Belvedere Pomarańcza, it might come in handy to learn how to pronounce the admittedly odd-looking word first.

*Poe-ma-rahn-cha.*

Now that we have that little exercise in Polish phonetics out of the way, we can tell you what Pomarańcza is: It is the first flavored vodka worthy of the Belvedere name.

Pomarańcza's luxurious taste starts with natural ingredients and natural ingredients only, including 100% Dańkowskie Gold Rye and the Mediterranean's finest sun-drenched fruit.

Then, under the watchful eye and discerning palate of renowned flavor artist Elie-Arnaud Denoix, the peels of the aforementioned Mediterranean fruit are combined with the spirit in a proprietary maceration process.

If you don't so happen to be versed in the whys, whats and wherefores of the maceration process, it fuses the spirit with the fruit's essential oils, creating a more natural flavor—a critical step towards Pomarańcza's sumptuous taste. The maceration is then slowly and lovingly distilled in Alambic pot stills over very low heat—another critical step towards Pomarańcza's sumptuous taste.

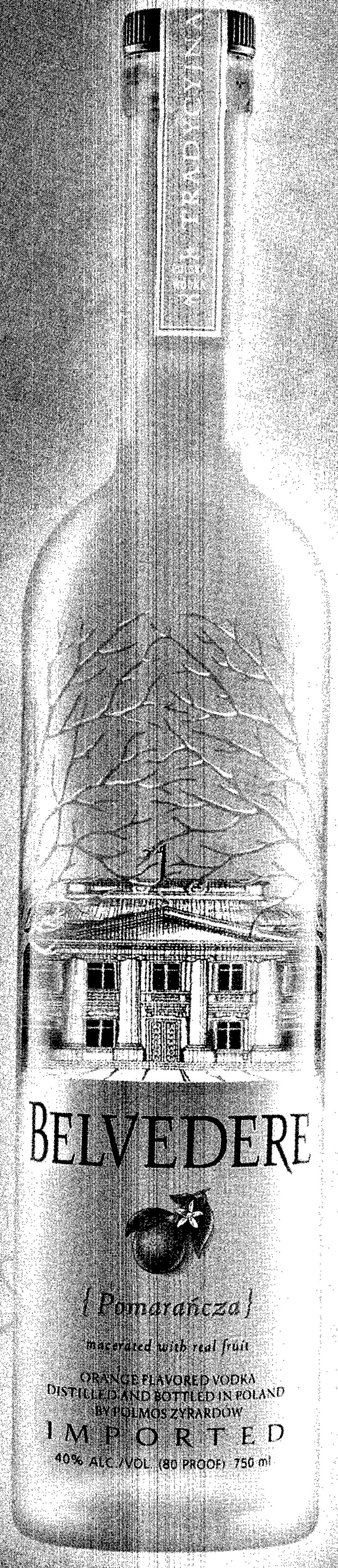
Rather than waxing poetic about our maceration process, we'll give you a simple visual demonstration: A flavored vodka using only the finest natural ingredients imbued in a time-consuming maceration process will cloud over when chilled or savored over ice.

Yes, Pomarańcza clouds over.

The result of all this fussiness is a wondrous and subtle combination of orange blossom, sweet orange, mandarin and lime very deserving of being enjoyed neat and of the beautiful Polish toast that graces every bottle of Belvedere.

*Na zdrowie!*

Or, for the Polish-challenged reader, *na-zdro-vee-ah!*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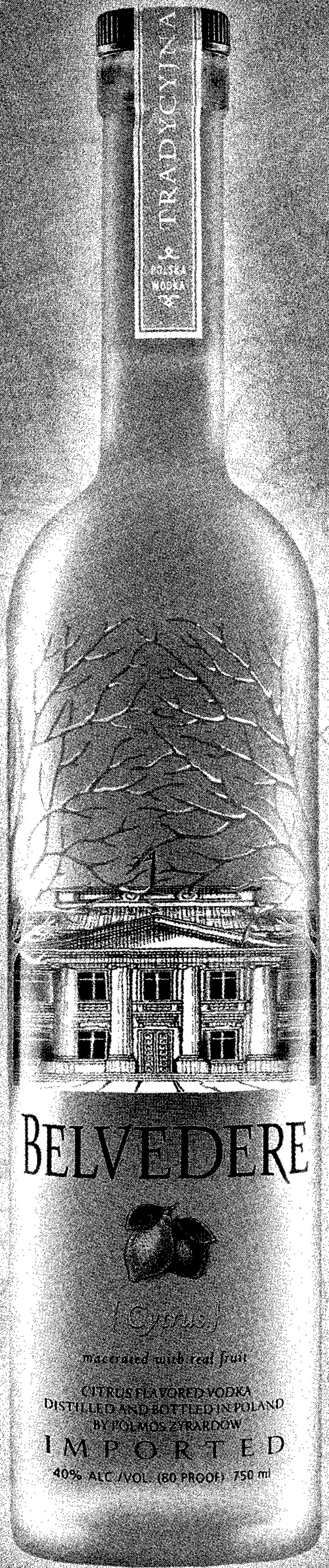
{Pomarańcza}
macerated with real fruit
ORANGE FLAVORED VODKA
DISTILLED AND BOTTLED IN POLAND
BY POLMOS ZYRARDOW
IMPORTED
40% ALC./VOL. (80 PROOF) 750 ml

Belvedere Citrus Flavored Vodka, 40% ALC./VOL. (80 proof) Belvedere Orange Flavored Vodka, 40% ALC./VOL. (80 proof). Imported by Millennium Import LLC, Minneapolis, MN U.S.A. ©2004 Millennium ® Import LLC. www.belvederevodka.com


TRADYCYJNA
POLSKA WODKA
BELVEDERE
Cytrus
macerated with real fruit
CITRUS FLAVORED VODKA
DISTILLED AND BOTTLED IN POLAND
BY POLMOS ZYRARDOW
IMPORTED
40% ALC./VOL. (80 PROOF) 750 ml

It has occurred to us that before you say *czesc* — or, if you prefer English to Polish greetings, *hello* — to Belvedere Cytrus, it might come in handy to learn how to pronounce the admittedly odd-looking word first.

*Sit-troos.*

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If you don't so happen to be versed in the whys, whats and wherefores of the maceration process, it fuses the spirit with the fruit's essential oils, creating a more natural flavor — a critical step towards Cytrus's sumptuous taste. The maceration is then slowly and lovingly distilled in Alambic pot stills over very low heat — another critical step towards Cytrus's sumptuous taste.

**HELLO. MY NAME IS CYTRUS.**

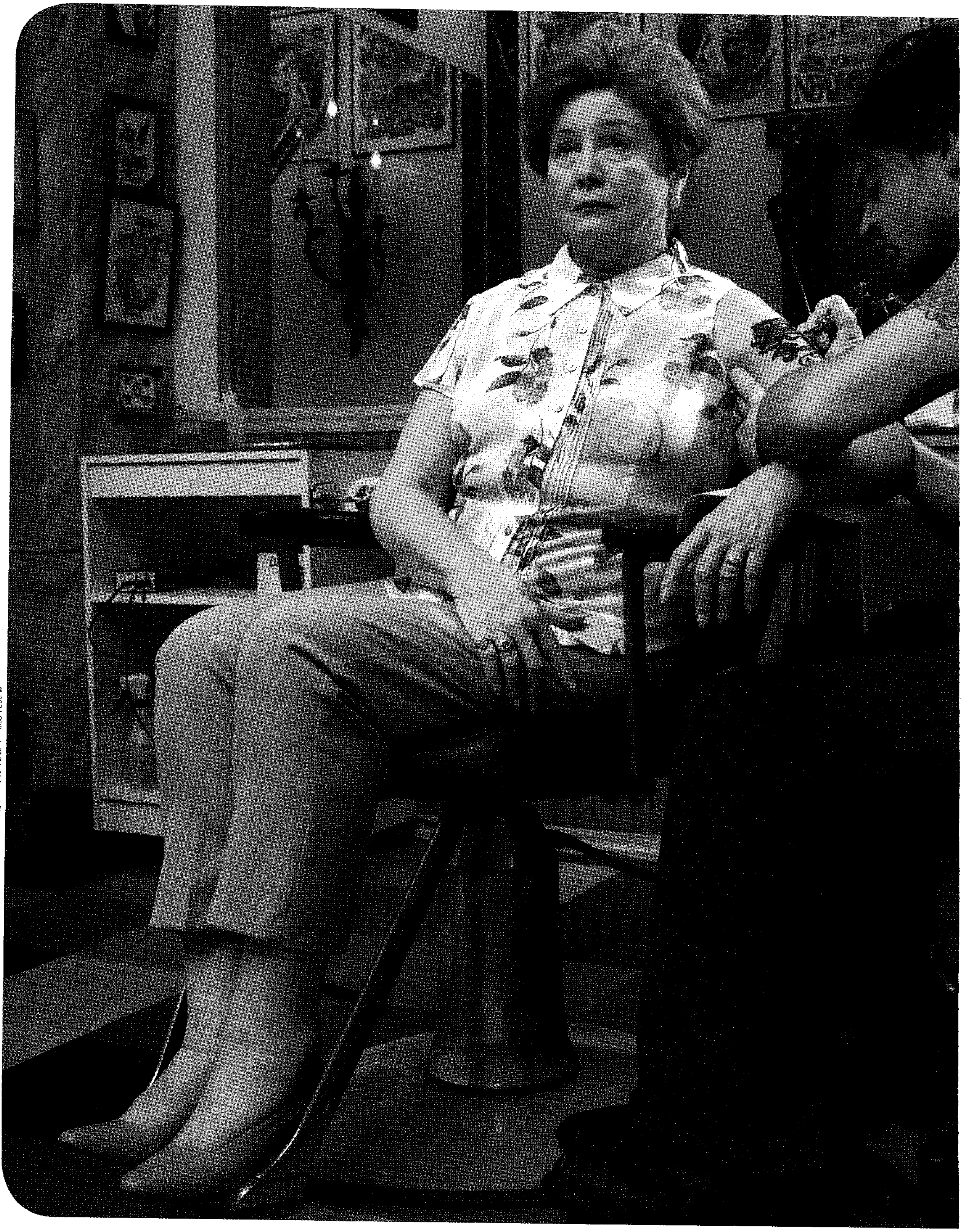
Rather than waxing poetic about our maceration process, we'll give you a simple visual demonstration: A flavored vodka using only the finest natural ingredients imbued in a time-consuming maceration process will cloud over when chilled or savored over ice.

Yes, Cytrus clouds over.

The result of all this fussiness is a wondrous and subtle combination of lemon and lime very deserving of being enjoyed neat and of the beautiful Polish toast that graces every bottle of Belvedere.

*Na zdrowie!*

Or, for the Polish-challenged reader, *na-zdro-vee-ah!*



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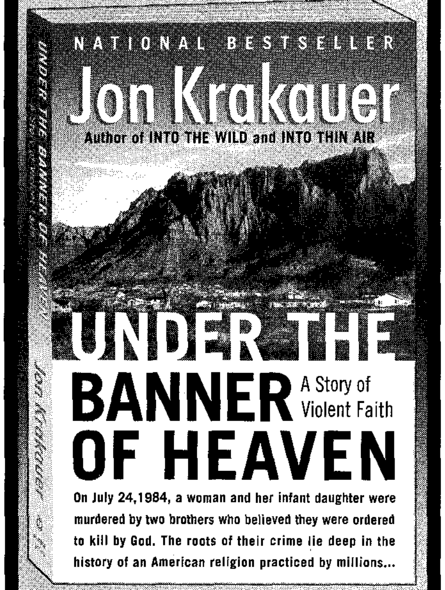
NATIONAL BESTSELLER
Jon Krakauer
Author of INTO THE WILD and INTO THIN AIR
UNDER THE BANNER OF HEAVEN
A Story of Violent Faith
On July 24,1984, a woman and her infant daughter were murdered by two brothers who believed they were ordered to kill by God. The roots of their crime lie deep in the history of an American religion practiced by millions...
UNDER THE BANNER OF HEAVEN
Jon Krakauer

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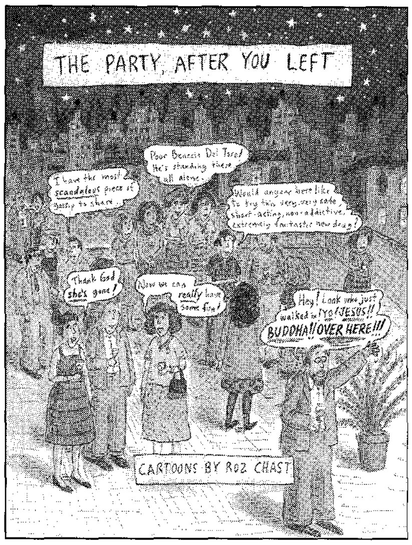
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I have the most scandalous piece of gossip to share...
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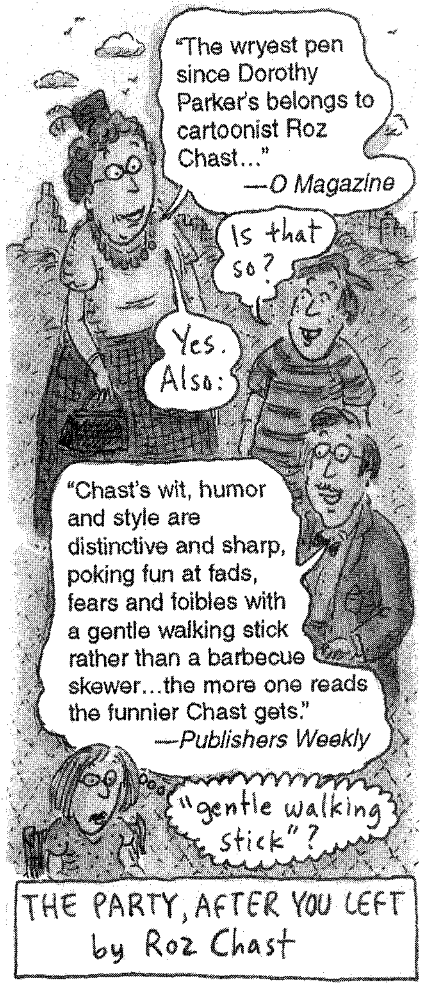
CARTOONS BY ROZ CHAST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# CONTRIBUTORS

Connie Bruck ("Supermoderate!," p. 68) is a staff writer. Her most recent book is "When Hollywood Had a King: The Reign of Lew Wasserman, Who Leveraged Talent Into Power and Influence."

Seymour M. Hersh ("Plan B," p. 54) won this year's National Magazine Award for public-interest journalism for his pieces on the misuse of intelligence.

Bruce McCall (Shouts & Murmurs, p. 52) has been a contributor since 1979. His latest humor collection is "All Meat Looks Like South America."

Michael Agger (The Talk of the Town, p. 37) is a member of the magazine's editorial staff.

Louis Menand (Books, p. 102) is a professor of English at Harvard. His books include "The Metaphysical Club" and "American Studies."

Michael Crawford (Sketchbook, p. 88), a staff artist and a painter, has been contributing to the magazine since 1983.

Edmund Morris ("The Unknowable," p. 40) became Ronald Reagan's authorized biographer in 1985 and published "Dutch: A Memoir of Ronald Reagan" in 1999. His other books include "The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt," which won a Pulitzer Prize, and "Theodore Rex."

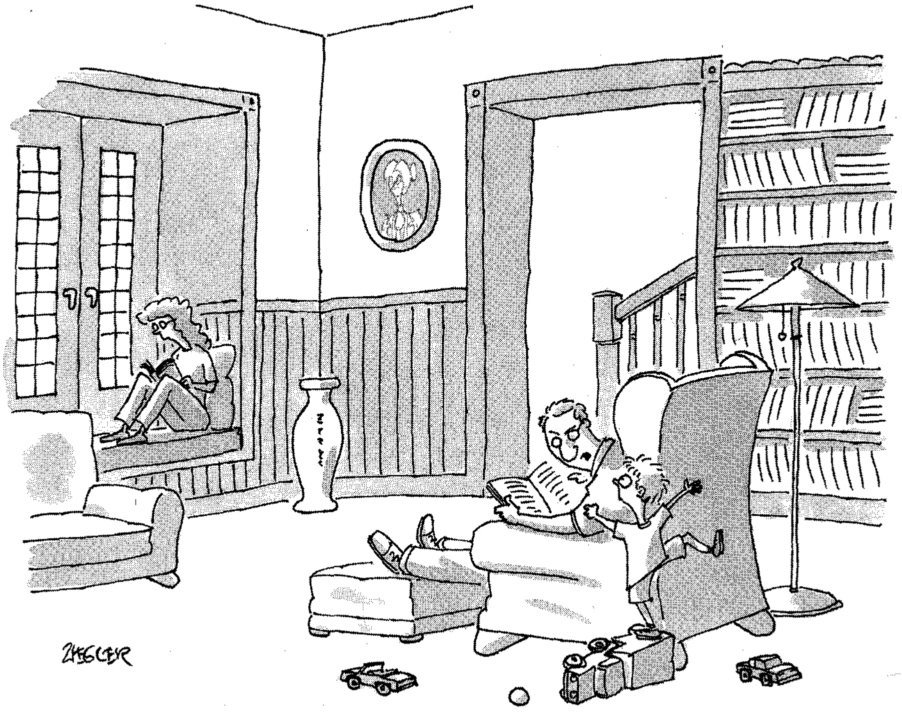
John Updike (Books, p. 98) is a regular contributor of fiction, poetry, and criticism. A collection of his short fiction, "The Early Stories: 1953-1975," came out in October.

Louise Erdrich (Fiction, p. 90) has published ten novels, including "The Master Butchers Singing Club" and "Four Souls."

Sasha Frere-Jones (Pop Music, p. 106) is the magazine's pop-music critic.

David Denby (The Current Cinema, p. 108) is the author of "Great Books" and, most recently, "American Sucker."

Barry Blitt (The Back Page, p. 114) is working on illustrations for several projects, including a children's book. ♦



*"Go bother your mother. She's only reading chick lit."*

# THE MAIL

## GOD AND LAND

My wife and I were among the Israeli settlers Jeffrey Goldberg interviewed—he seems to have concentrated on "crazies," a group in which I am proud to have been included ("Among the Settlers," May 31st). I will not detail the misquotes and misunderstandings in his description of his visit with us. The real problem with the piece is that Goldberg seems to view Judaism as Western liberalism with holidays. This makes him uncomprehending of, and unsympathetic to, genuinely religious Jews. His inability to understand our world view leads him to conclude that we are leading Israel to disaster, when in fact we "zealots" are what stand between Israel and disaster.
*Moshe Saperstein*
*Neveh Dekalim, Gush Katif, Gaza*

Reading Goldberg's article, I had to ask why the world demands that Jews be ethnically cleansed from the West Bank, while a million Israeli Arabs maintain full citizenship in pre-1967 Israel. I cannot understand why there should be such a focus on the settlements, but none on Arab rejectionism, which is the root cause of the conflict. I cannot understand why so much attention is given to Palestinian refugees, while the rights of millions of Israelis whose parents fled, or were expelled from, Arab lands are ignored. I cannot understand why Arab lands receive international sympathy for keeping descendants of Arab refugees stateless, while Israel is punished for absorbing Jewish refugees. I cannot understand why there is never any matching focus on the racism in Arab lands—for example, in Jordan, whose laws preclude Jews from citizenship.
*Doron Lubinsky*
*Atlanta, Ga.*

Goldberg's article is a poignant presentation of the tragedy of a state that began with the hope of democracy. That Jewish parents—or Palestinian parents — would sacrifice their children for land, and in God's name, is antithetical to the belief, and certainly the Jewish belief, that one life constitutes a world. Notwithstanding the Biblical story of Abraham's atrocity on Mt. Moriah, no child ought to be sacrificed. How presumptuous for anyone, Jew or Arab, to believe that he or she knows what God thinks or wants.
*Esther Altshul Helfgott*
*Seattle, Wash.*

Goldberg writes that transforming Israel and the occupied territories into a single, "binational" state would mean "the dissolution of Israel as a haven for Jews." But such a state would, quite simply, be a democracy—a state that is the state of all its citizens. In South Africa, the transition from apartheid did not involve the subjugation of a minority by the previously subjugated majority but, rather, the metamorphosis of an apartheid state into a democracy, in which citizenship was unlinked from race and other demographic considerations.
*Anthony Alessandrini*
*Brooklyn, N.Y.*

Goldberg notes that "at its narrowest, Israel is nine miles wide." He also cites Yasir Arafat's refusal to recognize "any historical Jewish connection to Palestine." And yet his wide-ranging but ultimately imbalanced depiction of extremism among Jews living beyond the Green Line obscures the reality that flows from these observations: the retention of territories in historical Judea and Samaria is vital in order to assure that Israel will not be overrun by implacable enemies. And, yes, many Jews (myself included) and Christians do attach significance to what the Bible says about the Promised Land—and to the yearning of more than two thousand years which has brought us back here.
*Jack E. Friedman*
*Jerusalem, Israel*

•

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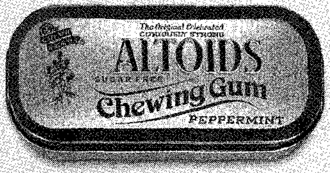

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# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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| | | | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27 | 28 | 29 | | | | |

*For expanded events listings, please visit www.newyorker.com/goingson.*

## THIS WEEK

### HEARTS OF GOLD

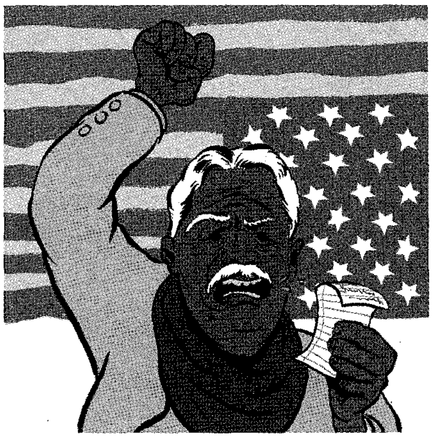
In the eighties and early nineties, the record producer Hal Willner put rock and jazz stars to work on the music of composers like Nino Rota, Kurt Weill, and Charles Mingus, often in startling combinations. His Mingus record, "Weird Nightmare," featured Chuck D reading from the composer's autobiography, "Beneath the Underdog," and Keith Richards singing "Oh Lord, Don't Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb on Me." In recent years, Willner has taken his approach onstage. Last year, at Brooklyn's Prospect Park Band Shell, he organized a tribute to Leonard Cohen; this year, he returns with an event devoted to the music of Neil Young. Cat Power, Ron Sexsmith, Teddy Thompson, Jane Siberry, and others will be on hand to perform songs (both famous and obscure) from Young's long career. The man himself is invited, and, though Willner doesn't expect him to appear, the house orchestra has been given special instructions, just in case. (June 26; see Night Life.)

### NUYORICAN CELEBRATION

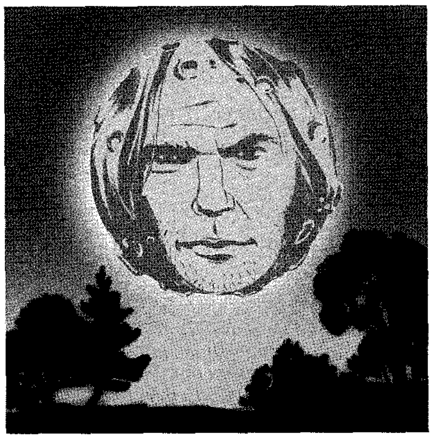
When the poet Miguel Algarin started hosting readings in his Lower East Side apartment, in the early seventies, the response was so great that he took over a local Irish bar and created the Nuyorican Poets Café. Algarin moves uptown to SummerStage to mark three decades of spoken-word performances, poetry slams, and music with a few dozen of his friends, including the poets and writers La Bruja, Fred Feliciano, Amiri Bakara, and Reg E. Gaines and the salsa band Willie Villegas y Entre Amigos. (June 24; see Above and Beyond.)

### TAR BEACH

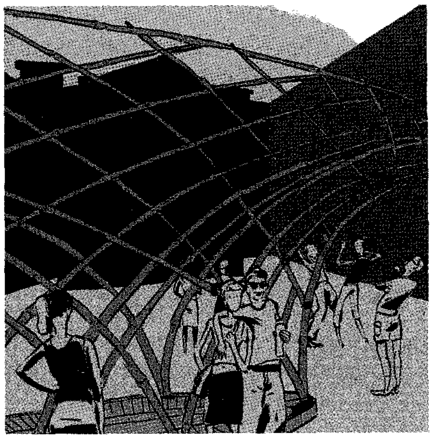
The winner of MOMA's annual Young Architects Program is given free rein to transform the courtyard at P.S. 1. This year, the group nARCHITECTS has built an urban beach with fog, a wading pool, and a stretch of sand. A canopy of freshly cut bamboo, which will fade to brown as the summer progresses, spans the entire courtyard. (Opens June 27; see Art).



*Miguel Algarin celebrates thirty years of the Nuyorican Poets Café.*

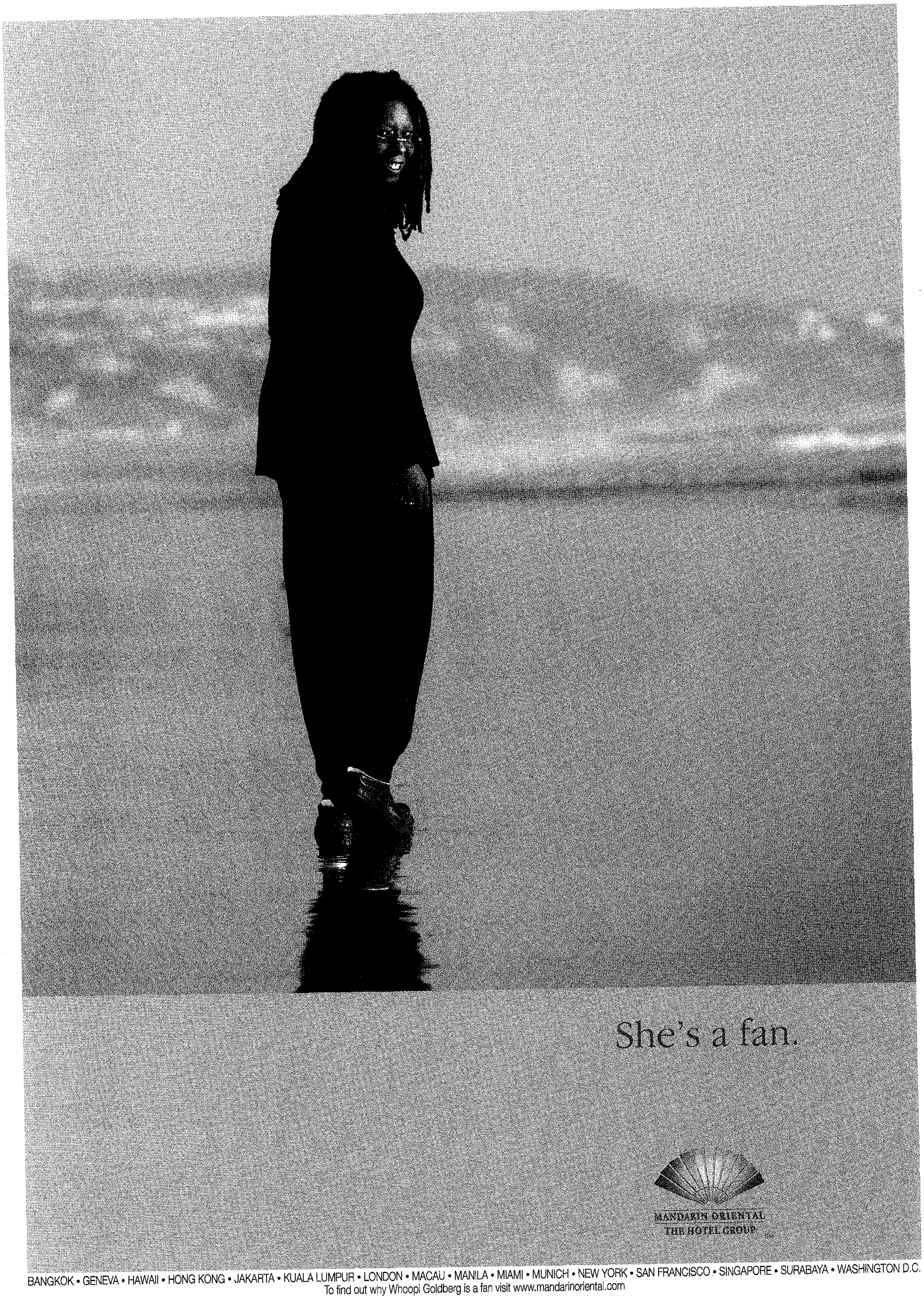


*The producer Hal Willner leads a tribute to Neil Young at "Celebrate Brooklyn!"*



*The courtyard at P.S. 1 has been transformed into a summer oasis.*

ZOHAR LAZAR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# THE THEATRE
## OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

*Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.*

**AFTER THE FALL**
Peter Krause and Carla Gugino star in a Roundabout Theatre Company revival of the Arthur Miller play. Directed by Michael Mayer. Previews begin June 25. (American Airlines, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300.)

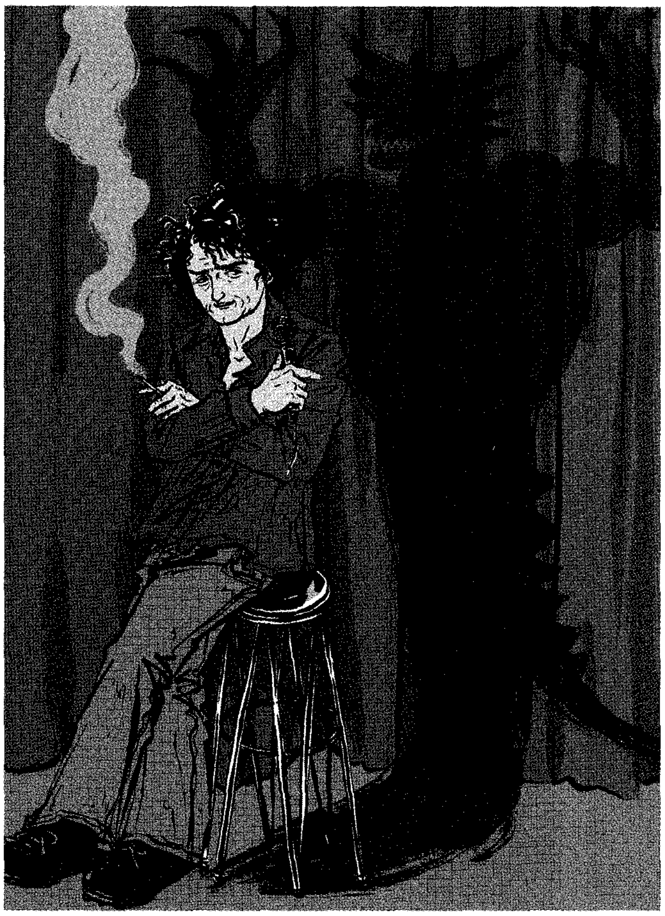
**CIRQUE JACQUELINE**
Andrea Reese returns to the Triad with her one-woman show about Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. Directed by Charles Messina. Opens June 24 at 7. Thursdays only. Through July 22. (158 W. 72nd St. 212-352-3101.)

**THE FROGS**
Lincoln Center Theatre inaugurates its twentieth season with an expanded production of Stephen Sondheim and Burt Shevelove's musical from 1974, based on the Aristophanes comedy. There's a new book by Nathan Lane, who plays the lead, Dionysos, and six new songs by Sondheim. Directed and choreographed by Susan Stroman, with sets by Giles Cadle and costumes by William Ivey Long. In previews. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200.)

**HOW TO BUILD A BETTER TULIP**
Lois Nettleton stars in the première of a new comedy written and directed by Mark Giesser, inspired by Alexandre Dumas's novel "The Black Tulip," about rival breeders trying to produce a new variety of flower. With sets by John C. Scheffler. In previews. (Acorn, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200.)

**MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING**
The Public Theatre's 2004 Shakespeare in the Park summer series begins with a comedy, starring Kristen Johnston, Dominic Chianese, Jimmy Smits, and Sam Waterston. Directed by David Esbjornson. In previews. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 212-539-8750.)

**THE MYSTERY PLAYS**
Second Stage Theatre kicks off its summer series uptown at the McGinn/Cazale with a new drama by Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, a co-production with the Yale Repertory Theatre. Directed by Connie Grappo. In previews. Opens June 28 at 7. (Broadway at 76th St. 212-246-4422.)


*The Irish comic Dylan Moran, in "Monster," at the Village Theatre.*

YUKO SHIMIZU

## OPENED RECENTLY

**ADDRESS UNKNOWN**
An epistolary play based on the late-nineteen-thirties novel by Kathrine Kressmann Taylor that explores the friendship between a German Jewish art collector in San Francisco, Max Eisenstein (Jim Dale), and his friend and business partner, Martin Schulse (William Atherton), who has returned to Germany. The play is well crafted, but the stiff staging constrains the performances; Max and Martin narrate their letters from opposite ends of a broad, oblong table, which is meant to indicate the ocean and the emotional gulf between them but also weakens their connection. Directed by Frank Dunlop. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 212-239-6200.)

**AFTERBIRTH: KATHY AND MO'S GREATEST HITS**
The actor-writers Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney appear together on the New York stage for the first time in fifteen years, in a production directed by Mark Brokaw. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 212-246-4422.)

**ASSASSINS**
The Roundabout Theatre Company's revival of Stephen Sondheim and John Weidman's musical about nine marginalized souls who each took aim at an American President is well sung, gorgeous to look at, and meticulous in its detail. But it has been freighted with more weight than it can properly carry. This dark cartoon—a kind of glib carnival of carnage—was first performed in 1991, at the beginning of the Gulf War, and was meant to have its Broadway début just after September 11, 2001. The delay of more than two years has not helped the show's karma or its message. Directed by Joe Mantello. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/3/04.) (Studio 54, at 254 W. 54th St. 212-719-1300.)

**BOISE**
The Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre company presents a new play by David Folwell about a middle manager who is derailed by a flirtation. Directed by Rob Bundy. (224 Waverly Pl., west of Seventh Ave. 212-868-4444.)

**BUG**
As written by Tracy Letts and directed by Dexter Bullard, this play is never exactly what it seems. It begins deceptively simply, in a residential hotel somewhere near Oklahoma City, in a town God may or may not have forsaken. Agnes White (the incomparable Shannon Cochran), who works as a bartender, stands at the door to her small, dingy room. Before long, a friend shows up with a little distraction—a guy named Peter Evans (Michael Shannon), who seems to want to hang out. Scenes of casual surrealism culminate, in the second half of the play, in acts of physical and emotional violence that do more than shock: they arouse both pity and despair. Cochran and Shannon give not only two of the most nuanced performances you'll ever see but two of the greatest. (5/17/04) (Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St., at Seventh Ave. 212-239-6200.)

**FABULATION**
A dark comedy by Lynn Nottage ("Intimate Apparel") follows the downward slide of a pregnant former publicist into the world of welfare mothers and crack dens. Directed by Kate Whoriskey. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. Through July 2.)

**FROZEN**
Bryony Lavery's play about a grieving woman whose daughter was killed by a pedophile has moved to Broadway. Starring Swoosie Kurtz and Brían F. O'Byrne and directed by Doug Hughes. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 212-239-6200.)

**LEMON MERINGUE FAÇADE**
Ted Lange, a.k.a. Isaac the bartender from "The Love Boat," is also a playwright. This play, his fourteenth, set at a baby shower in Pasadena, touches on the emotional crises of a group of thirty-something blondes. Directed by Jackie Alexander. (New Perspectives Theatre Company, 750 Eighth Ave., between 46th and 47th Sts. 212-730-2030. Through June 28.)

**MISS JULIE**
Scott Schwartz ("Golda's Balcony") directs a contemporary adaptation of Strindberg's drama, in a new translation by Truda Stockenström. With scenic design by Beowulf Boritt. (Cherry Lane Theatre, 38 Commerce St. 212-239-6200.)

**MONSTER**
The Irish comedian Dylan Moran brings his act to the Village Theatre, part of the British Irish Comedy Invasion Festival. (158 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100. Through July 3.)

**THE MUSICAL OF MUSICALS—THE MUSICAL!**
An affectionate satire of Broadway musicals by Eric Rockwell (music) and Joanne Bogart (lyrics) shreds the conventions of the form in five swiftly paced vignettes, each about a woman who can't pay the rent. Rockwell and Bogart, performing with Lovette George and Craig Fols, parody the theatrical stylings of Rodgers & Hammerstein, Stephen Sondheim, Jerry Herman, Andrew Lloyd Webber, and Kander & Ebb. In the Sondheim bit, "A Little Complex," set in a New York apartment building called The Woods, double-entendres run wild. In the Webber section, George, playing a cash-challenged diva, belts the ballad "I've Heard That Song Before." Pamela Hunt directs. (York Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 212-868-4444.)

**OTHELLO**
In this Aquila Theatre Company production, directed and adapted by Robert Richmond and set on a British military base in modern-day Cyprus, several scenes take place in a bar; Cassio (Tom Tate) performs idiotic and drunken dance-hall gyrations; Iago (Anthony Cochrane) wears a beret (apparently channelling Saddam Hussein) as he cooks up his evil political schemes; and audience members, many of whom are seated among the players, are drawn into the action as extras. Lloyd Notice's Othello is almost too intense; he overpowers the rest of the cast. Aquila leavens the mood on Tuesday nights with a revival of its popular rendition of "The Comedy of Errors," set in Turkey in the nineteen-thirties. (Baruch Performing Arts Center, 25th St. between Lexington and Third Aves. 212-239-6200. Through June 27.)

**RUSH'S DREAM**
A new play by the Democratic media consultant Julian Mulvey and Chris Breyer shows how the muckraking United States Presidential campaign of 1800 damaged the friendship of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Directed by Alexandra Farkas. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-868-4444.)

**SIGHT UNSEEN**
In a revival of Donald Margulies's subtle 1992 play at the Manhattan Theatre Club's Biltmore Theatre,

under the impeccable direction of Dan Sullivan, Jonathan Waxman (Ben Shenkman), a wunderkind of American modern art who is in England for a retrospective of his work, walks into a threadbare farmer's cottage in Norfolk to visit Patricia (Laura Linney), his former muse, and, in her words, "the sacrificial shiksa," whom he jilted fifteen years earlier. Shenkman and Linney play masterfully together; they make quicksilver shifts of mood sparkle with nervy implication. (6/7/04) (261 W. 47th St. 212-239-6200.)

## ALSO PLAYING

**AIDA**
Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 212-307-4747.
**AVENUE Q**
Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.
**BOMBAY DREAMS**
Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 212-239-6200.
**BOY**
Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 212-279-4200. (Closes June 27.)
**THE BOY FROM OZ**
Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.
**BRIDGE & TUNNEL**
45 Bleecker Street Theatre, at 45 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100.
**CHICAGO**
Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200.
**FIDDLER ON THE ROOF**
Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 212-307-4100.
**42ND STREET**
Ford Center, 213 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.
**GOLDA'S BALCONY**
Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
**HAIRSPRAY**
Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 212-307-4100.
**HERE LIES JENNY**
Zipper Theatre, 336 W. 37th St. 212-239-6200.
**I AM MY OWN WIFE**
Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.
**THE LION KING**
New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100.
**MAMMA MIA!**
Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-563-5544.
**MOVIN' OUT**
Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100.
**THE NORMAL HEART**
Public, 425 Lafayette St. 212-239-6200.
**THE PRODUCERS**
St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.
**WICKED**
Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-307-4100.
**WONDERFUL TOWN**
Al Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

## DANCE

**AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE**
A.B.T.'s spring season closes with the story ballets "Coppélia" and "Romeo and Juliet." For a full cast list, see www.abt.org. ♦ June 21-25 at 8 and June 26 at 2 and 8: "Coppélia." ♦ June 28-29 at 8: "Romeo and Juliet." (Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center. 212-362-6000. Through July 3.)

**NEW YORK CITY BALLET**
City Ballet's centennial celebration of George Balanchine closes with an eclectic selection of dances set to music by Russian composers. One of Balanchine's favorite groups, the Georgian State Dance Company, from Tbilisi, will give three performances of traditional Georgian dances, the third of which ends the season. ♦ June 22 at 7:30: "Monumentum pro Gesualdo," "Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," and "Musagèt." ♦ June 23 at 8: "Valse-Fantaisie," "Zakouski," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Cortège Hongrois." ♦ June 24 at 8: "Valse-Fantaisie," "Zakouski," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," and "Musagèt." ♦ June 25 at 8: "Monumentum pro Gesualdo," "Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Romeo and Juliet," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and the Georgian State Dance Company. ♦ June 26 at 2: "Circus Polka," "Romeo and Juliet," "Valse-Fantaisie," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Cortège Hongrois." ♦ June 26 at 8: "Circus Polka," "Concerto for Two Solo Pianos," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," and the Georgian State Dance Company. ♦ June 27 at 3 (an all-Balanchine program): "Cortège Hongrois," "Stravinsky Violin Concerto," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." ♦ June 27 at 7: The Georgian State Dance Company. (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-870-5570.)

**PILOBOLUS DANCE THEATRE**
For the seventeenth summer in a row, the quirky acrobats from Connecticut set up camp at the Joyce for a month. Three rotating programs mix repertory works with one première per program. In "Megawatt," Jonathan Wolken amps up the troupe's high-impact gymnastics with music by Radiohead, Primus, and Squarepusher. "Night of the Dark Moon," an ensemble piece by Alison Chase, retells the story of Orpheus and Eurydice as a love triangle in which Death is the third player. And Michael Tracy presents the dreamy duet "Warm Heart," set to an ambient score by Aphex Twin. With the company's most acclaimed works, "Untitled" (1975) and "Day Two" (1980). (175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 212-242-0800. June 21-25 and June 28 at 8 and June 26 at 2 and 8. Through July 17.)

**COMPLEXIONS CONTEMPORARY BALLET**
Dwight Rhoden and Desmond Richardson celebrate their company's tenth anniversary with an evening-length work—Rhoden's first for the troupe—called "Anthem." A meditation on the current political

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climate, the piece is divided into three sections: "Red (The Force)," "White (The Clearing)," and "Blue (The Game)." (Skirball Center for the Performing Arts, 566 LaGuardia Pl., at Washington Square Park S. 212-992-8484. June 21 at 7 and June 22-26 at 8.)

**"THE GRAND STEP PROJECT"**
Dancing in the Streets celebrates its twentieth anniversary with a collaboration between the site artist and choreographer Stephan Koplowitz and the composer Quentin Chiappetta that unleashes fifty dancers dressed as office workers on the steps of six grand staircases in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and the Bronx. This week, the dances take place on the steps of Brooklyn Borough Hall (June 25 at 12, 12:45, and 1:30), the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (June 26 at 2, 2:45, and 3:30), and the National Museum of the American Indian (June 28 at 5, 5:45, and 6:30). Each performance is preceded by a choral concert. (For more information, call 212-625-3505.)

8:88
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*At Volume, a nightspot in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, the entertainment has ranged from hip-hop stars to local marching bands.*

MAXIMILIAN BODE

**SUMMER DANCE RIOT**
Heidi Latsky looks delicate, but her dancing is fierce, and her choreography is arresting even when it's hard to watch—during the solo "Bitch," a woman with her back to the audience bends over, hands on the floor, skirt over her head, and twitches her bare legs angrily to a hip-hop beat. In three evenings at the Tank, Latsky weaves her solo and group pieces into house-party revels that include a d.j., go-go dancers, a large woman acrobat, and a retro girl group. (432 W. 42nd St. 315-447-3262. June 24 at 8:30 and June 25-26 at 8 and 10.)

**"UNFRAMED"**
Notes in Motion, a collaborative of modern choreographers, presents six new works, each a meditation on clinging or separating, at Dance Theatre Workshop. Dancing takes place not only on the stage but also on the sidewalk as audience members arrive and in the lobby at intermission. (219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. June 24-25 at 7 and June 26 at 3 and 7.)

**KIMBERLY BARTOSIK**
Backed by a soundtrack of chirruping frogs and crickets, Bartosik, Derry Swan, and Daniel Squire (all of them former or present Cunningham dancers) perform a trio called "I sat down on the bank the grass was damp a little then I found my shoes wet." Part of Danspace Project's "City/Dans" series. (St. Mark's In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-674-8194. June 24-27 at 8:30.)

**"DEADMANDANCING EXCESS"**
In a converted basement in Dumbo, the choreographer and dancer Koosil-ja moves across a narrow catwalk stage, sandwiched between the audience and ranks of TV monitors. As screens flicker with scenes of violent movie murders, she uses elaborate props, a staircase, and her expressive body to reinterpret the deaths. (Nest, 88 Front St., at Washington St., Brooklyn. 212-375-0186. June 23-26 at 8.)

## OUT OF TOWN

**JACOB'S PILLOW DANCE FESTIVAL**
The Brazilian troupe Grupo Corpo makes its fourth appearance in six years at the festival in the Berkshires. Performers graft the swinging hips and loose torsos of Brazilian dance onto a ballet base. In "Nazareth," the undulant beat of *carnaval* is implied rather than indulged. The minimalist "21" features a score played on PVC tubing by the found-music ensemble Uakti. (Ted Shawn Theatre, Becket, Mass. 413-243-0745. June 23-26 at 8 and June 26 and 27 at 2.)

## NIGHT LIFE CONCERTS

**"MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING"**
Alfresco dancing at Lincoln Center continues on June 23 with the **Lincoln Center Afro-Latin Jazz Orchestra.** June 24: **Los Macondos de Colombia.** June 25: Rockabilly with **Rosie Flores.** June 26: Salsa and Latin soul with **Son Boricua.** June 29: Cuban *son* and *timba* with **Tiempo Libre.** (Fountain Plaza. All shows are at 7:30, with dance lessons at 6:30. For more information, call 212-875-5766. Through July 16.)

**JVC JAZZ FESTIVAL**
The annual gathering of big-name pop acts and mainstream jazz players winds down this week. Highlights follow. June 23 at 8: Lou Reed, with the up-and-coming vocalist Nellie McKay and the veteran singers the Holmes Brothers. (Carnegie Hall.) June 23 at 8: An appearance by the Polish musician Tomasz Stanko, one of Europe's most inventive jazz trumpeters. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St.) June 24 at 8: The singer Dianne Reeves celebrates Sarah Vaughan. The pianist Peter Cincotti opens. (Carnegie Hall.) June 24 at 8: A night of Afro-pop with Angélique Kidjo and Femi Kuti and Positive Force. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St.) June 25 at 8: An all-star quartet with Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Dave Holland, and Brian Blade (Carnegie Hall). June 25-26: George Clinton and Parliament-Funkadelic. (Apollo Theatre.) (For more information, call 212-501-1390 or visit www.festivalproductions.net.)

**"CELEBRATE BROOKLYN!"**
June 24 at 7:30: Reggae with **Burning Spear.** June 26 at 7:30: A tribute to Neil Young (see This Week). (Prospect Park Band Shell, Prospect Park W. at 9th St. 718-855-7882, ext. 45.)

**KATIE MELUA**
This young singer from Georgia (the Black Sea republic, not the Southern state) is a sensation in her adopted country, England. She favors a comforting mix of adult contemporary, jazz, and blues. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400. June 24 at 8.)

**CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE**
June 26 at 3: The R. & B. diva Patti LaBelle. June 27 at 3: A program of bands from Canada brings together Blue Rodeo, Sam Roberts, Joel Plaskett, and O Susanna. (Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. 212-360-2777.)

**DANCING CRANE GEORGIAN DANCE THEATRE**
This ensemble is based in Warwick, New York, but nearly all its members are natives of Georgia. They present a program of traditional music from their homeland, but no dancing, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. (Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. For more information, call 212-316-7469. June 27 at 3.)

**"THE BLOOD ON THE TRACKS PROJECT"**
A thirtieth-anniversary tribute to Bob Dylan's album, with Joan Osborne, Vernon Reid, Ollabelle, Toshi Reagon, and many others. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. June 29 at 8.)

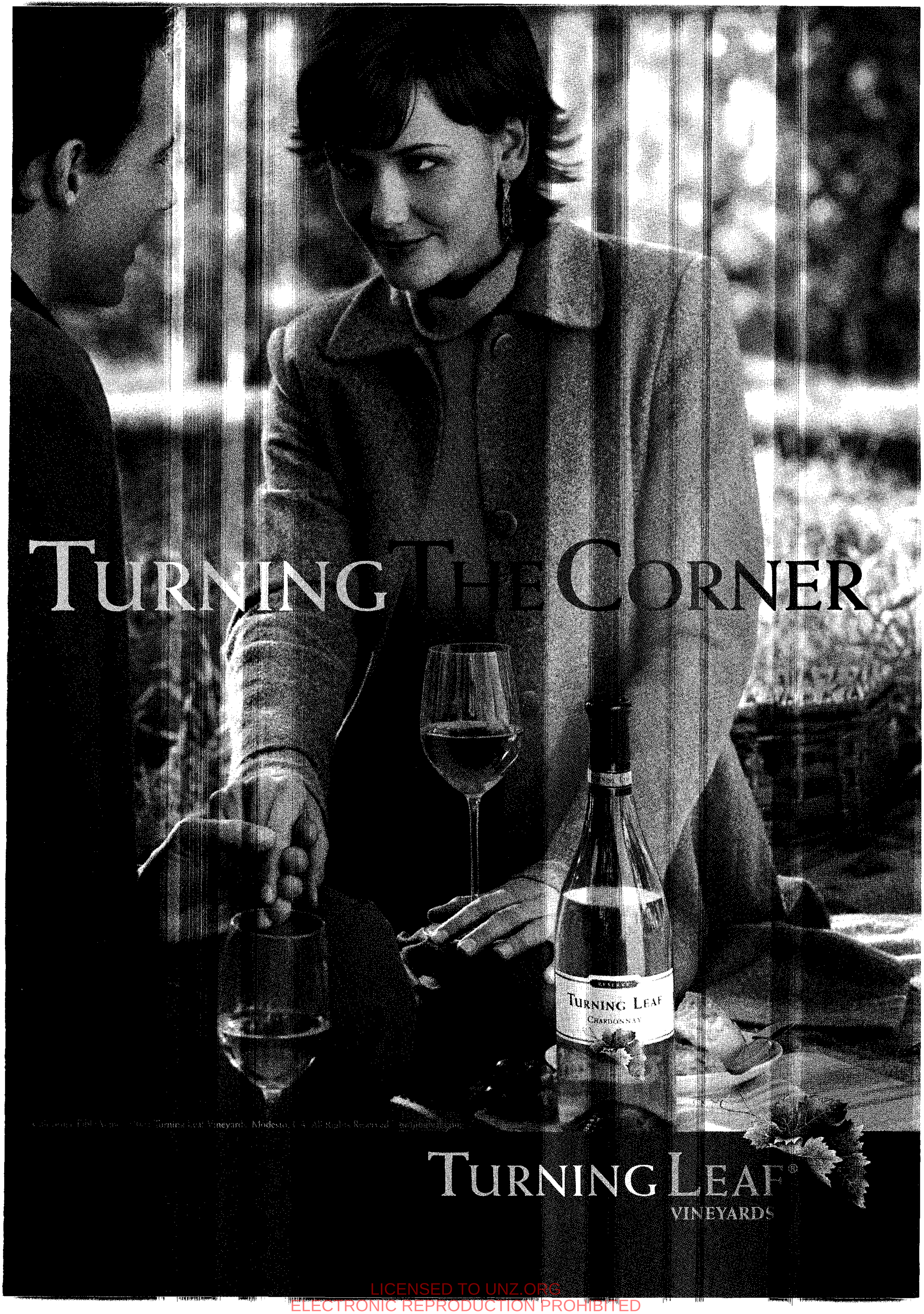
## CLUBS

*Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.*

**B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL**
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—June 25: A rare club date for **Aretha Franklin,** the Queen of Soul.

**BOWERY BALLROOM**
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—June 23: The **Secret Machines** play psychedelic rock that combines the stomp of vintage Led Zeppelin with the cinematic sweep of Pink Floyd. June 25-26: **Iron & Wine** is Sam Beam, a fine acoustic guitarist with a fiercely bushy beard. He delivers his revivalist songs with a breathy, hushed voice.

**HANK'S SALOON**
46 Third Ave., at Atlantic Ave., Brooklyn (718-625-8003)—June 24: The slide-show folkie **Andy Fried-**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**man.** With **Matt Curreri,** a clever and unkempt songwriter whose catchy rock-and-roll chanteys capture the warm joys and cold sweats of one's twenties.

**IRVING PLAZA**
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (212-777-6800)—June 24: The noted songwriter **J. J. Cale** ("After Midnight," "Cocaine") has a new solo album, the first in eight years. It's called "To Tulsa and Back." June 28: Some artists strive for the cutting edge, but not **Chris Robinson.** Since quitting his gig as vocalist for the retrophilic Black Crowes, in 2002, he has continued to steep his music in decades-old Southern rock idioms.

**JOE'S PUB**
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—June 25: **Pinetop Perkins,** the ninety-year-old pianist and veteran of Muddy Waters' band. June 28: The Senegalese singer **Youssou N'Dour** warms up for the Great African Ball, coming to Roseland next month.

**MERCURY LOUNGE**
217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700)—June 24-26: **Jesse Malin,** the ex-lead singer of the local hardcore band Heart Attack and the former front man for the glam rockers D Generation, has matured into an introspective singer-songwriter. With **Bobby Bare, Jr.,** on the final night.

**PETE'S CANDY STORE**
709 Lorimer St., Brooklyn (718-302-3770)—June 26: **Greta Gertler** is an Australian expat with a spacious voice and a welcome weakness for lushly orchestrated seventies-era pop. June 27: The singer-songwriter **Amy Allison.** With **Matt Curreri** (see Hank's Saloon).

**ROTHKO**
116 Suffolk St., at Rivington St. (212-475-7088)—June 25: **Enon** bridges the gap between clever indie rock and experimental noise. June 29: The local quartet **Shelby** offers new songs from its forthcoming guitar-and-violin-fuelled record, "The Luxury of Time." With **Aerovox** and **Fort Ancient.**

**SATALLA**
37 W. 26th St. (212-576-1155)—June 25-26: The Jamaican keyboardist **Monty Alexander** and the guitarist **Ernest Ranglin,** who were in Kingston for the birth of ska back in the sixties, perform songs from their new album, "Rocksteady."

**SIDEWALK CAFÉ**
94 Avenue A, at 6th St. (212-473-7373)—**Keren Ann,** an Israeli-born singer-songwriter now based in France, caresses her acoustic guitar with Continental discretion and sings intimate ballads about love, loss, and other late-night activities. She's here early on Tuesday nights this month, performing songs from her forthcoming United States début album, "Not Going Anywhere."

**VOLUME**
99 N. 13th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-388-3588)—Serge Becker, the mastermind behind the eighties night club Area and other seminal New York party spots, is one of the partners in this venue, housed in a converted paint factory. Like Area, where the wild décor was reinvented on a regular basis, Volume is transformed almost nightly as different crowds pour into its plain, white-walled space. On opening night, in January, visitors were given white jumpsuits and videos were projected onto them and the walls. In February, the young English rapper Dizzee Rascal performed on the back of a flatbed truck, and later that month the photographer Terry Richardson staged an X-rated photo shoot, complete with audience participation. Upcoming shows include **Black Dice,** on June 24, and **Les Savy Fav,** on June 25.

## JAZZ AND STANDARDS

**ALGONQUIN HOTEL**
59 W. 44th St. (212-840-6800)—Through June 26: The fair-voiced **Jane Monheit** sings "Dancing in the Dark," "That's Entertainment," "You and the Night and the Music,"and other classics by the Broadway and Hollywood composer Arthur Schwartz.

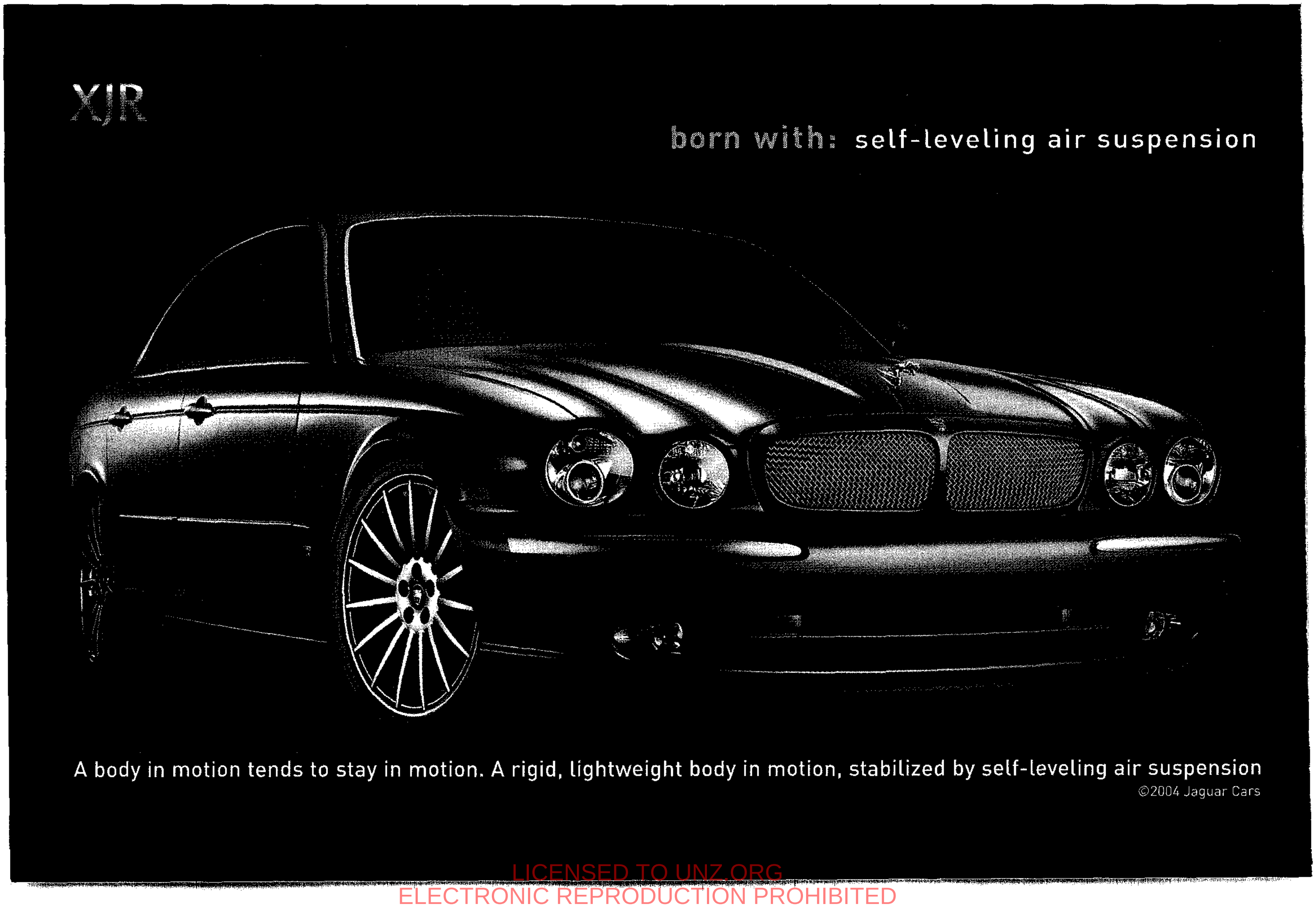
**IRIDIUM**
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Through June 27: **Kenny Rankin,** a revived seventies mainstay, has what it takes to restore pop-jazz singing's good name. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

**JAZZ STANDARD**
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—June 25-27: After decades of providing the muscle for others, the splendid bassist **Buster Williams** has been stepping out on his own with a tight-knit quartet. June 28: **Pyeng Threadgill,** the daughter of the composer and musician Henry Threadgill, sings the blues of Robert Johnson.

**SMOKE**
2751 Broadway, between 105th and 106th Sts. (212-864-6662)—June 25-26: The **Harold Mabern** trio. It's been some fifty years since Mabern left Memphis, but he's never lost the blues-based ebullience that made him a mainstream piano giant.

**SWEET RHYTHM**
88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (212-255-3626)—June 28: The drummer **Lewis Nash** and the saxophonist **Steve Wilson** unite for bare-boned but highly musical duets.

**VILLAGE VANGUARD**
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Under the auspices of the JVC Jazz Festival, the relentlessly eclectic pianist, composer, and bandleader **Uri Caine** gives us six different bands, over six different nights. Collaborating with Greg Osby and DJ Olive, or reconfiguring Bach and Mahler, Caine has ideas and energy to spare. June 22: A trio with Drew Gress and Ben Perowsky. June 23: A septet with Joyce Hammann, Chris Speed, Jim Black, Michael Formanek, Ralph Alessi, and DJ Olive. June 24: A quintet with Tim LeFebvre, Zach Danizger, Olive, and Barbara Walker. June 25: A quartet with Osby, Gress, and Perowsky. June 26: An octet with Hammann, Speed, Alessi, Gress, Jim Black, Olive, and Walker. June 27: The trio with Gress and Perowsky. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.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# ART
## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-879-5500)—**"Painters of Reality: The Legacy of Leonardo and Caravaggio in Lombardy"** is a mouthful of a title for a big, taste-changing show that tracks varieties of passionate naturalism from Leonardo through the birth of the Baroque. Half-familiar names—Luini, Moroni, Savoldo, Moretto—become unforgettable. The show achieves dramatic unity in its climax: the arrival of Caravaggio, whose realism fulfilled his precursors' dreams while revolutionizing pictorial aesthetics. His "Supper at Emmaus" (1601), on loan from the National Gallery in London, flabbergasts. In the show's coda, we meet the little-known Giacomo Ceruti (1698-1767), an astringent, intensely poetic observer of the poor. Through Aug. 15. ♦ **"August Sander: People of the Twentieth Century, a Photographic Portrait of Germany."** Through Sept. 19. ♦ **"Childe Hassam, American Impressionist."** Through Sept. 12. ♦ **"Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261-1557)."** Through July 4. ♦ **"Dangerous Liaisons: Fashion and Furniture in the Eighteenth Century."** Through Aug. 8. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MOMA QNS)**
33rd St. at Queens Blvd., Long Island City (212-708-9400)—Jean Shin's **"Projects 81,"** a site-specific mural and hanging sculpture, has been fashioned from the cast-off clothing of MOMA employees. Through Sept. 27. ♦ **"Humble Masterpieces,"** a collection of a hundred and twenty-two objects either drawn from the museum's collection (such as a Post-it note) or under consideration for acquisition (such as M&M's). Through Sept. 27. ♦ **"Fashioning Fiction in Photography Since 1990."** Through June 28. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, 10 to 5, and Friday evenings until 7:45.)

**GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—**"Constantin Brancusi: The Essence of Things"** features a silly title, too many weakly sentimental works, and a woeful lobby installation. But it's great. The room of four "Bird" sculptures unfolds a staggering range of stylistic genius, from mythic poetry to Jazz Age elegance. Certain pieces are epiphanic. The all-pedestal "Caryatid" (1914-26) remains radical for its union of art and furniture, and "Mlle. Pogany II" (1919) is a surprising, sublime sculpture from a dozen or so viewpoints. The Guggenheim's ramp energizes this show, as an overly reverential mounting of it at the Tate Modern did not. Through Sept. 19. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

**WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART**
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—A tidy essay of a show, **"Evidence of Impact: Art and Photography 1963-1978,"** samples avant-garde works from the period just before photography shed its marginal status among the arts. Conceptualists predominate: Mel Bochner, photographing shaving cream in 1968; Adrian Piper, photographing herself in a mirror, darkly, during a personal crisis in 1971; Charles Ray, modelling "All My Clothes" (1973). The celebrated "New Topographies" photographers of American places seem a mite threadbare now, Stephen Shore excepted. As often happens, a single Diane Arbus—the one of a suburban couple sunning in their back yard—steals the show. Through Oct. 10. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

**JEWISH MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (212-423-3200)—**"Modigliani: Beyond the Myth."** Through Sept. 19. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45; Thursdays, 11 to 8; and Fridays, 11 to 3.)

**MUSEO DEL BARRIO**
Fifth Ave. at 104th St. (212-831-7272)— **"MOMA at El Museo."** Through July 25. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

**P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER**
22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—**"Canopy,"** nARCHITECTS' summer installation in the P.S. 1 courtyard, opens June 27 (see This Week). (Open Thursdays through Mondays, noon to 6.)

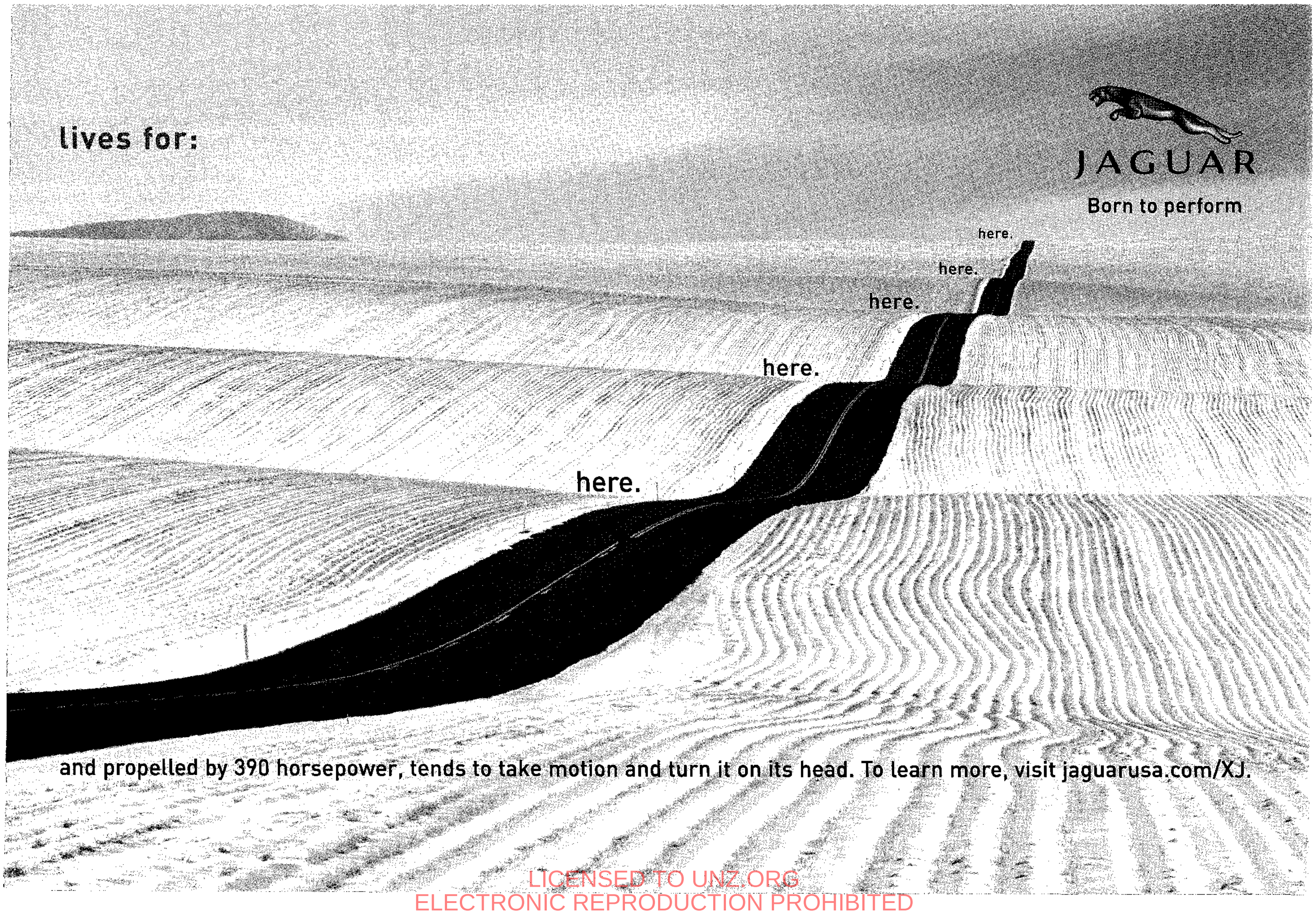
**STUDIO MUSEUM IN HARLEM**
144 W. 125th St. (212-864-4500)—**"Fred Wilson: Objects and Installations, 1979-2000"** is the first retrospective of work by the artist famous for his mock museum installations. Through July 4. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

## GALLERIES—UPTOWN

*Summer-hours warning: many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.*

**ENRIQUE CHAGOYA**
Chagoya offers obstreperous drawings of Rumsfeld, Cheney, Rice, and company. The strongest images channel a sense of indignant fatalism about the nation's trajectory. Fans of Philip Guston's "Poor Richard" drawings may also enjoy Chagoya's Bush-era update, "Poor George." It's both clever and faithful to its source, though perhaps too faithful to have any real satirical bite. Through July 2. (Adams, 41 W. 57th St. 212-644-5665.)

**GUY PÈNE DU BOIS**
A stylish satirist and an influential art critic, Pène duBois (1884-1958) is one of those tantalizing cases of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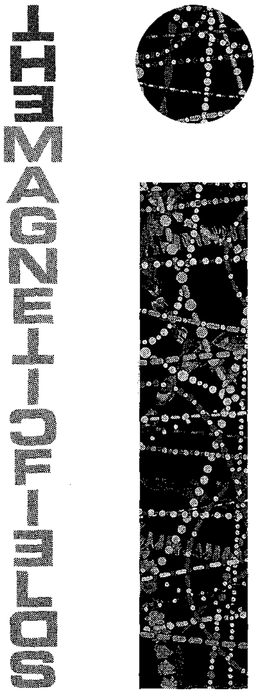

i: the new album by the Magnetic Fields

"Stephin Merritt is the great tragicomic songwriter of his age...If the world were just, any number of songs from *i* would break through and make him a rich man." - *TIME*

"Full of witty, melancholic pop... There aren't that many bands anymore that feel it only right to craft *albums* - cohesive, thematic musical efforts." - *Newsweek*

From the creators of 69 Love Songs - "★★★★ - A pinch of Cole Porter, a dash of Neil Tennant, then liquidise with a slosh of Oscar Wilde and Morrissey. Hugely impressive." - *MOJO*

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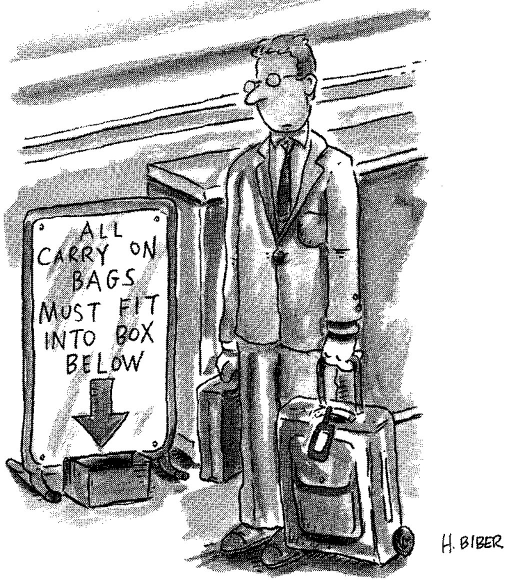
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near-greatness. This first half of an overdue retrospective tracks his career from art school until he moved to Paris, in 1924. In the earliest pictures, Pène duBois can almost be mistaken for his lifelong friend Edward Hopper—his style has the same decisive, almost graphic economy. Temperamentally, though, they were opposites: Pène duBois wrote that Hopper made him feel like "a foolish butterfly." Gregarious and amused, Pène duBois became a sort of Daumier for the Jazz Age, painting long-limbed flappers and corpulent lawyers in bright, tart colors. Through July 9. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 212-535-5767.)

### *Short List*

**AGNES MARTIN**
PaceWildenstein, 32 E. 57th St.
212-421-3292. Through July 2.
**GERHARD RICHTER**
Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. 212-517-8677.
Through July 2.
**STANLEY SPENCER**
CDS, 76 E. 79th St. 212-772-9555.
Through July 27.
**NEIL WELLIVER**
Alexandre, 41 E. 57th St.
212-755-2828. Through July 2.

## GALLERIES—CHELSEA

**TONY FEHER**
The only discordant note in this beautiful show is the title, "The Wart on the Bosom of Mother Nature," which suggests jokey aggression or homely sentimentality. Neither emotion—nor, for that matter, Mother Nature herself—has much to do with the absorbing delicacy of Feher's work, which transforms ordinary refuse (Saran Wrap, potato-chip bags, polystyrene packaging, bottles of Windex) into wry, post-consumer koans. Feher sidesteps our expectations; each agglomeration of castoffs feels oddly precise, and naggingly evocative. Through July 2. (D'Amelio Terras, 525 W. 22nd St. 212-352-9460.)

**SANTI MOIX**
A large cluster of small canvases on one wall offers variants on the dryly voluptuous big paintings nearby. The effect is a little dizzying and overeager, as if this Barcelona-born artist wanted to assure us that he is not, not, not running out of ideas. If there is a problem here, it's the spectre of formula: all these stately abstract flotillas suggest a Surrealist version of parade-watching. But the show's real novelty, a sequence of terrific plaster sculptures, offers a reminder of the huge natural talent humming like a motor under the Mardi Gras prettiness of Moix's surfaces. Through July 10. (Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave. 212-563-4474.)

**"HELLO, CHELSEA"**
Becky Smith's Bellwether gallery (lately of Williamsburg) inaugurates its new Manhattan space with the work of twenty-five young artists who run the gamut from currently pervasive styles to perversely dated ones (e.g., geometric abstraction, deadpan still-life). They include Adam Cvijanovic, whose giant nude in a flowery meadow turns the back wall into a soft-core fantasia, and Allison Smith, whose "Mustering Officer's Field Desk" previews her campaign to form a lesbian-separatist militia. Through July 24. (Bellwether, 134 Tenth Ave. 212-929-5959.)

### *Short List*

**ASHLEY BICKERTON**
Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St.
212-627-1018. Through July 30.
**MICHAL ROVNER**
PaceWildenstein, 534 W. 25th St.
212-929-7000. Through July 16.

## GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

**CHRISTOPH BÜCHEL**
You don't just view Büchel's work; you have to squeeze, crawl, and climb your way through it. Part of the gallery is used to re-create the habitat of

## POP NOTES

### HOT FUNK IN THE SUMMERTIME

When the weather gets warm, the various roots and shoots of George Clinton's spacey, soulful Parliament-Funkadelic empire appear. The Mothership is landing at the Apollo Theatre for a pair of shows in late June; in the meantime, there are also a couple of new P-Funk-related records.

Bootsy Collins, who was a P-Funk regular before striking out on his own, has the same rubbery voice, irrepressible personality, and virtuoso way with a bass guitar that he did in 1969, when he was a member of James Brown's legendary band. On **"Play with Bootsy"** (Thump Records), Collins collaborates with such hip-hop and dance-floor stars as Snoop Dogg, Fat Joe, and Fatboy Slim. (If the guest list seems slightly behind the times, that's because the record was originally released in Europe in 2002.) While the Young Turks all acquit themselves admirably—Snoop Dogg's drawl pulls nicely against Bootsy's cartoonishly sweet vocals on "Love Gangsta"—the most affecting moments are courtesy of old-timers. The soul legend Bobby Womack contributes vocals to "Groove Eternal," which sounds uncannily like an early Prince single, and George Clinton himself shows up for a brief but wonderful demonstration of abiding chemistry on "Funk Ship."

Bootsy's album feels like a party. **"Waltz of a Ghetto Fly"** (Pias), the solo début of the longtime P-Funk keyboardist Joseph (Amp) Fiddler, is more like an afterparty: slower, sexier, and more intimate. Fiddler last surfaced, along with his brother Thomas ("Bubz"), in the funk group Mr. Fiddler back in 1989; their record was an excellent specimen of soulful if derivative P-Funk that sank without a trace. This time, Fiddler worked with several electronica producers to craft a moody, sophisticated sound. The song "Eye to Eye" is an instant classic, a smooth soul ballad with a fluttering keyboard line; "If You Can't Get Me Off Your Mind" recalls vintage Stevie Wonder; and "You Play Me" references Sly Stone's "You Caught Me Smilin'." And, of course, George Clinton puts in an appearance, donating vocals to the meandering (but extremely funky) title song.

—*Ben Greenman*

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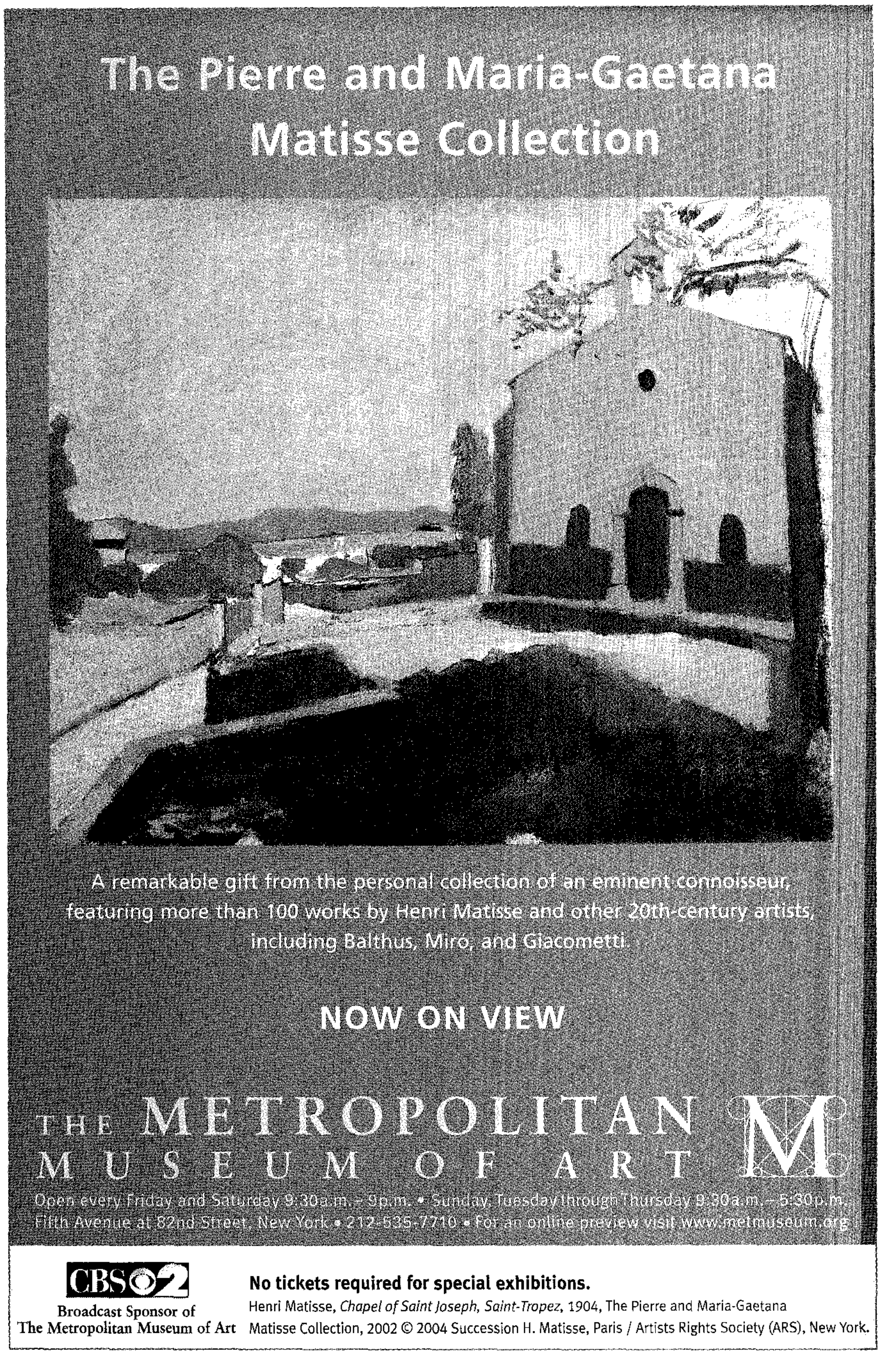
the "average" middle-American male: a messy apartment strewn with beer cans and devoid of aesthetic touches, aside from a framed Colt 45 poster and a radio tuned to a rock station. A rough cinder-block wall bisects the rooms, further tightening the space. A gallery waiver cautions those who suffer from anxiety and claustrophobia to exercise "extreme care" but doesn't warn against disappointment: Büchel's multi-floor extravaganza at Maccarone, in 2001, set the bar higher than this cramped spectacle. Through Aug. 7. (Swiss Institute, 495 Broadway. 212-925-2035.)

**CHRISTOPHER KNOWLES**
A charming retrospective celebrates Knowles, an outsiderish artist with insider bona fides. (Born in 1959 with neurological damage, he is a longtime associate of Robert Wilson.) Knowles's "Typings," which are visual poems sometimes limited to the typed letter "c," and his childish but clarion drawings in ink or oil marker wield sit-up-straight éclat. "Sunshine Superman," a film by Richard Rutkowski, shows the handsome artist at work and dancerly play. Like the Donovan song to which the film is set, Knowles's charisma is feather light, infectious, and ever so slightly sinister. Through July 1. (Gavin Brown, 620 Greenwich St. 212-627-5258.)

**"O.K., AMERICA!"**
The Viennese curator of this show, Peter Noever, is more interested in shifting cultural boundaries and global uncertainty than in America-bashing. The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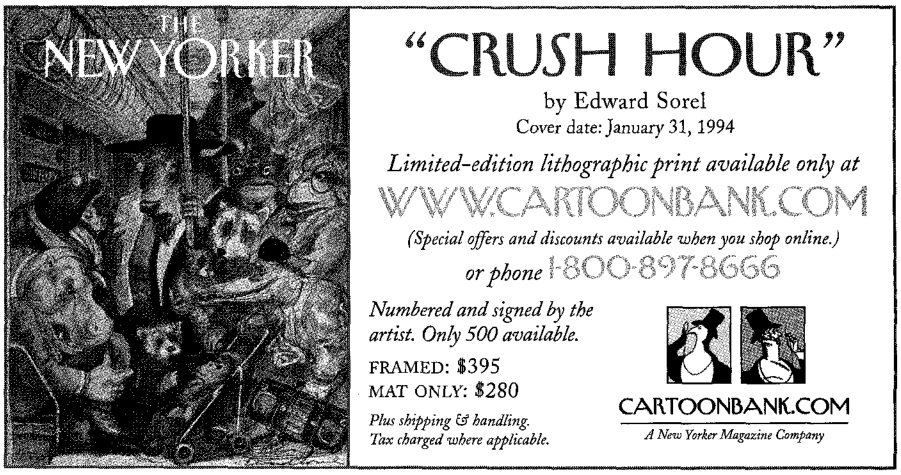

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works are dark and humorous, from the Swiss artist Daniele Buetti's photograph of a model with a blistered Versace brand on her chest (made by poking the back of a magazine photo with a pin) to the South African Kendell Geers's collection of pilfered drinking glasses once used by the likes of Keith McNally, Jorge Pardo, and Vito Acconci. The sole American in the show is the astutely chosen Raymond Pettibon, whose cartoon-like drawings offer tentative existential musings. Through June 26. (Apexart, 291 Church St. 212-431-5270.)

**"REPEAT PERFORMANCE"**
Younger artists have been ripping off older ones forever, but here the forerunners are given credit, while their work becomes fodder for wicked ruminations on influence. Mungo Thomson turns Bruce Nauman's iconic/ironic slogan "The True Artist Helps the World by Revealing Mystic Truths" into a bumper sticker. Jeff Feld re-creates early performance art with "the only part of Robert Rauschenberg's 'Pelican' that I know." Jill Miller digitally inserts herself into a 1971 John Baldessari video, sets it to music by Missy Elliott, and makes the elder statesman of California conceptualism break-dance with her. Through July 3. (Artists Space, 38 Greene St. 212-226-3970.)

**"TROUBLE IN PARADISE"**
An uneven group show, curated by Amy Lipton, on the theme of ecocide: nature poisoned or poisonous. Alexis Rockman paints mutant flora and fauna in a desert cut away to reveal buried name-brand garbage. Brian Alfred's "Testlab"—in his catchy style of razor-edged, flat, dyspeptically colored shapes—renders a sterile room in which an apparatus sprays poppies with what you know is not mere water. A large photograph by Edward Burtynsky revels in the Luciferian colors of nickel tailings on a mudflat, from an industrial plant in Ontario. Through June 26. (Van Brunt, 819 Washington St. 212-243-8572.)

### *Short List*

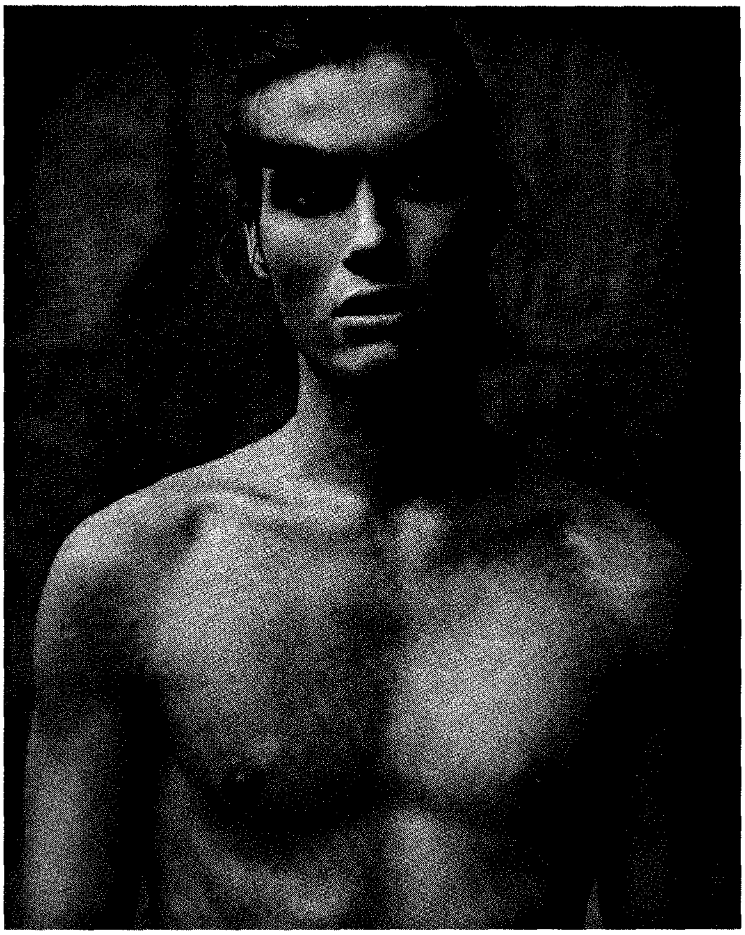
**JOHN BISBEE**
Plane Space, 102 Charles St. 917-606-1268. Through June 26.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

**JOHN O'REILLY**
Fourteen small, panoramic Polaroid photomontages dense with personal history and references to classical myths. The show, called "A Worcester Odyssey," originated with O'Reilly's purchase of ten photo albums that had belonged to a bus driver from that Massachusetts city who appears in each piece—rowing a canoe, in the woods, standing in front of a low brick wall or near a car. He is O'Reilly's stand-in for Odysseus, enduring a trip fraught with crumbling busts, rubble, doll houses, toy soldiers, real sailors, a Marsden Hartley painting of Jesus, parrots, and naked boys in swimming holes. Through July 2. (Julie Saul, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-627-2410.)

**AUGUST SANDER**
This show, which complements the Metropolitan's current Sander retrospective, presents thirty-three of the photographer's portraits of women from his epic "Citizens of the Twentieth Century" project. They include farm girls, a real-estate agent, an actress, circus performers, a group of well-dressed girls at a party, and a nun. "Rural Bride," in which a young, freckled woman with flowers in her hair blinks just as the shutter is released, and "Girl in a Circus Caravan," a portrait of a sad-faced girl reaching through the window of a trailer door to unlatch it, are among his most emotionally affecting works. Through July 9. (Yancey Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. 646-230-9610.)

**ANDY WARHOL**
A series of Polaroids show a topless Paloma Picasso staring at the camera, sometimes with a strange paper construction covering her forehead and one eye; in another series, Mick Jagger's naked torso and outstretched arms recall the early work of Robert Mapplethorpe. But this is Warhol, working in the late sixties and early seventies. The photographs were pasted into eleven small red notebooks and are being exhibited for the first time. The bulk of what's on view is pictures of friends at play: Kennedy children at the beach, Marisa Berenson eating an ice-cream sundae, Brigid Berlin mugging in aviator goggles and a red caftan. The gallery and the German publisher Steidl produced a boxed catalogue that faithfully recaptures, picture by picture, the immediacy of Warhol's Polaroids. Through July 2. (Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.)



*An untitled photograph by Ruven Afanador, at Throckmorton.*

**"OFF BROADWAY"**
In a rented space across from the Gourmet Garage in SoHo, four intrepid young Magnum photographers—Thomas Dworzak, Alex Majoli, Paolo Pellegrin, and Ilkka Uimonen—have designed a show of their work from various wars and catastrophic social upheavals, including those in Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Ethiopia, and Kosovo. Upstairs, the pictures are presented fairly straightforwardly. Downstairs, in a dark, brick-walled room, a soundtrack composed by Fabio Barovero, a founder of the band Mau Mau, accompanies a slide show of photographs projected onto a temporary cloth wall. Other black cloth walls form cubicles for mini slide shows, including one of Dworzak's pictures of sexually suggestive Taliban portraits, taken in Kandahar, some of which appeared in these pages during the recent war in Afghanistan. The Taliban portraits are in bright colors, but most of the work in the show is black-and-white, with no attribution or titles. The effect is dramatic and searing. Through June 27. (60 Mercer St. 212-929-6000.)

**INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY / ASIA SOCIETY**
A show of recent photography and videos from China, "Between Past and Future," fills both museums with a hundred and thirty works by sixty young artists. The incredibly fast transformation of Chinese society is the central theme. Riffing on traditional Chinese scroll painting, Wang Qingsong places an officially denounced art critic at the center of his updating of the "Night Revels of Lao Li," from the tenth century. Wang Wei backlights a long line of color transparencies placed on the floor, portraits of himself underwater, forcing the viewer to walk across his face. Liu Zheng's black-and-white portraits of women mourning at a country funeral and masked revellers at a New Year's Eve party elegantly evoke the stark contrasts in the new China. Sze Tsung Leong's large color prints showing ruined traditional architecture are sad reflections on the country's manic race to build. Through Sept. 4. (International Center of Photography, 1133 Sixth Ave. 212-857-0000. Asia Society, 725 Park Ave. 212-288-6400.)

### *Short List*

**RUVEN AFANADOR**
Throckmorton, 145 E. 57th St. 212-223-1059. Through July 31.

**ANDREAS GURSKY**
Matthew Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. 212-243-0200. Through June 27.

**LUIS GONZÁLEZ PALMA**
Robert Mann, 210 Eleventh Ave., at 25th St. 212-989-7600. Through July 2.

**CINDY SHERMAN**
Metro Pictures, 519 W. 24th St. 212-206-7100. Through June 26.

**WEEGEE**
Ubu Gallery, 416 E. 59th St. 212-753-4444. Through July 23.

**"GOVERNORS ISLAND"**
Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave. 212-935-3960. Through July 8.

## AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

**SOTHEBY'S**
June 24 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: André Breton said that he glimpsed "the wrath of ancestors" in Indian ritual masks from the Pacific Northwest, and the specimens offered in an auction of Native American art—terrifying, sublime, and otherworldly—would not have disappointed him. A mask of an owl (bought by a Surrealist in the nineteen-forties), from the Tsimshian tribe in British Columbia, has a movable mandible and working eyelids, which bring its frightening expression to life. Another mask from the same tribe, of a woman caught in a fit of eerie, Abderian laughter, is the sale's centerpiece; her face is exquisitely carved and finished, with tufts of delicate hair, deep-vermillion skin, and penetrating black eyes. The auction also includes weavings, baskets, jewelry, and other arts and crafts. ♦ June 29-30 at 10 A.M. and 2: The house closes its New York season with a sale of "arcade" art works, items ranging from the Old Master era to the present offered at moderate prices. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.)

**CHRISTIE'S**
June 23 at 10 A.M. and 2: In one of the marquee items in a sale of Native American art, mounted

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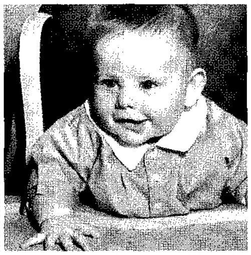

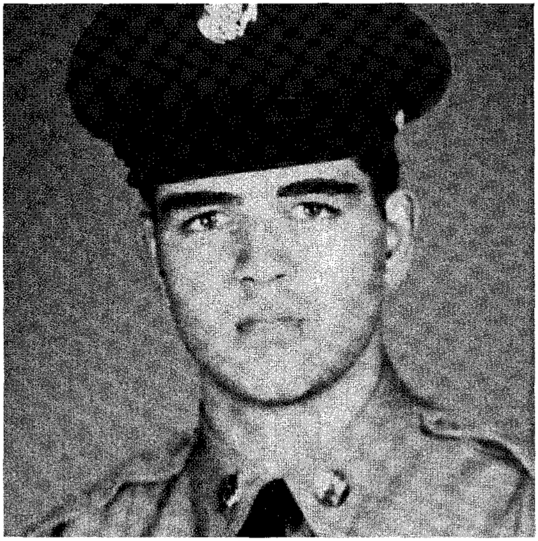

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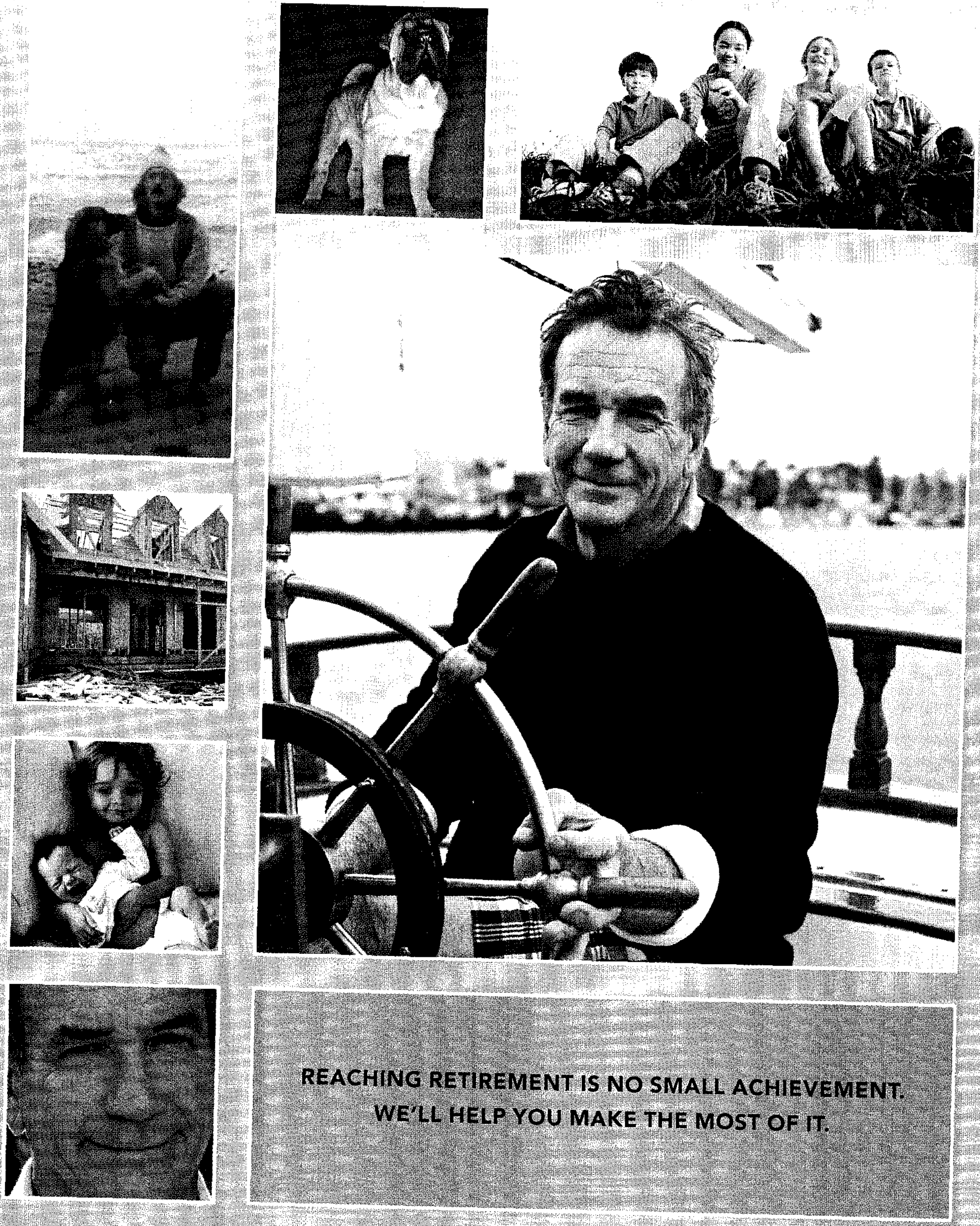
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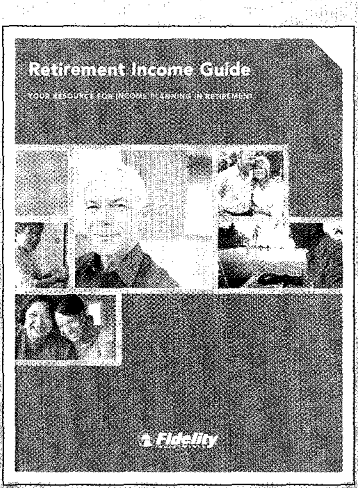

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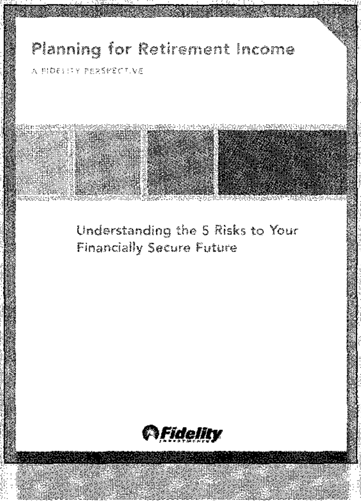

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## TABLES FOR TWO

**BAO 111**
111 Avenue C, at 7th St. (212-254-7773)—The obligatory white orchids, pretty wooden screens, and sake bottles lining the walls don't do much to counterbalance the ricocheting background noise of the eternal birthday party under way at the long table in the back of this always lively Vietnamese place. Pity the blind dates, of which there are many. But don't pity them too much, because the food here is probably more absorbing than anything they might find to talk about.

First-timers are encouraged to order the grilled short ribs, which are succulent and thick and cling to their lemongrass skewers. A lobster salad, piquant from lots of rice-wine vinegar and lime and seasoned with chile peppers, comes with licoricey pickled lotus stems. Tuna spring rolls are dribbled with truffle oil and served with a "pineapple-soy dipping sauce." They're a far cry from the simple, leaf-wrapped, mint-and-basil-stuffed rolls traditional in Vietnam—though those are on the menu, too. The recipes, according to Michael Huynh, the chef and part-owner, are "half what I learned from my mom, half New York style." Huynh, who is thirty-nine, began cooking in his mother's restaurant, in Saigon, when he was eleven. He came to America four years later as a boat person and was adopted by an Italian family with a restaurant in upstate New York.

Desserts provide all kinds of weirdness: a lime custard that is as spicy as anything on the dinner menu (thanks to a habañero marmalade); a deep-fried banana spring roll with chunky peanut-butter dressing; and, the other night, a white-chocolate mousse made with the extract of a Southeast Asian herb called *pandan*. The *pandan* turned the mousse pistachio green, which made for an odd contrast with the sour maroon pomegranate sauce that had been crisscrossed over it. A sip of expansive pineapple-and-papaya-flavored green tea was necessary to restore equilibrium.

Huynh is trained as an architect (he designed the space), and still practices "in the morning." Six months ago, he opened a sister restaurant, Bao Noodles, in Gramercy Park, downstairs from the apartment where he has lived for fourteen years. The food is slightly less adventuresome than that at Bao 111. "I wanted someplace to eat lunch," he said. (Open daily for dinner. Entrées $11-$24.)

—*Dana Goodyear*

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Sioux warriors ride the High Plains in a painting that decorates a buffalo-skin robe that was bought in 1883 by a perceptive (and perhaps cold) U.S. marine crossing Wyoming. The auction also features a Cree war shirt, as well as Hopi dolls once owned by Duchamp and Ernst. ♦ June 24 at 10 A.M.: An auction of entertainment memorabilia. ♦ June 24 at 6: In a benefit for the Crossroads Center, Eric Clapton parts with Blackie, a treasured Stratocaster that he played from 1973 to 1985, one of his most tumultuous and creative periods. Other Clapton instruments on auction—which he calls the "cream of my collection"—include a 1964 Gibson, his second guitar, and a 1937 Martin from the "Unplugged" sessions. ♦ June 25 at 10 A.M. and 2: A rare auction of James Audubon's masterpiece, "The Birds of America"; the sheets will be sold individually. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.)

**DOYLE**
June 23 at 10 A.M.: An auction of furniture, paintings, and decorations. (175 E. 87th St. 212-427-2730.)

**KESTENBAUM & COMPANY**
June 29 at 3: Two items of French Judaica are among the highlights of this auction of Hebrew printed books, manuscripts, and ceremonial art. A beautiful Torah scroll from 1776 (the top lot of the sale), first owned by the prominent Milhaud family of Provence, features an intricate mixture of Sephardic and Ashkenazic styles, while a copy of the January 13, 1898, issue of the newspaper *L'Aurore* contains "J'Accuse. . .!," Zola's broadside against the Army's general staff for its coverup of the Dreyfus Affair. (12 W. 27th St., thirteenth floor. 212-366-1197.)

## CLASSICAL MUSIC

## OPERA

**"MET IN THE PARKS"**
The Metropolitan Opera concludes its round of free outdoor performances, an annual gift to the city. **"Nabucco,"** with Frederick Burchinal (in the title role), Rebecca Copley (as Abigaille), Robynne Redmon, Ronald Naldi, and Vitalij Kowaljow; Joseph Colaneri conducts. (Cunningham Park, Queens. June 23.) ♦ A new cast features the baritone Mark Delavan, bringing his vocal might and imposing presence to the title role, and the soprano Andrea Gruber singing Abigaille; Colaneri. (Richmond County Bank Ballpark, Staten Island. June 26.) ♦ **"Madama Butterfly,"** with a cast headed by Kallen Esperian and Richard Leech; the redoubtable Julius Rudel takes the podium. (Marine Park, Brooklyn. June 25.) (All concerts begin at 8. No tickets required. For more information, call 212-362-6000.)

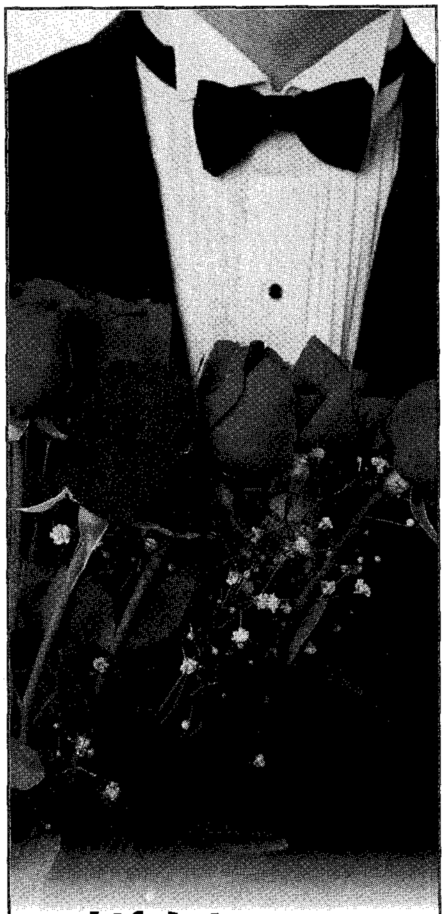
## CONCERTS IN TOWN

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC: "SUMMERTIME CLASSICS"**
As if to emphasize the Philharmonic's renewed commitment to Avery Fisher Hall, Zarin Mehta, the orchestra's president, has established a new summer series right in his own front yard. Bramwell Tovey, the Canadian conductor renowned for popularizing new music, bridges the gap between the varied repertoire of the orchestra's regular season and the warhorse-heavy programming of the summer parks concerts with a two-week schedule of light-classical fare. The guitarist Sharon Isbin makes her Philharmonic début on the first program, "Viva España!," an evening of music by Chabrier, Rodrigo (the "Concierto de Aranjuez"), Ravel, and others. (June 24 at 7:30 and June 25 at 8.) ♦ Tovey also conducts "Shall We Dance?," a program of chestnuts by such composers as Weber ("Invitation to the Dance," orchestrated by Berlioz), Tchaikovsky, Gounod (the Ballet Music from "Faust"), and Borodin. (June 26 at 8 and June 27 at 5.) (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-875-5656.)

**GALAPAGOS ART SPACE: "WEDNESDAYS-IN-RESIDENCE"**
Greenpoint's own Evan Hause, a versatile experimentalist whose interests range across the jazz, pop, and improvisational genres, is setting up camp this month at the laid-back Brooklyn performance space (complete with an evocatively lit pool). The third of his four concerts is a program of chamber and electronic music (including "From the Ghetto of the Crystal Imps," for percussion and tape); the performers include the percussion-and-piano duo Sole Nero. (70 N. 6th St., Brooklyn. June 23 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

**ABBY WHITESIDE FOUNDATION CONCERTS: JOHN KAMITSUKA**
The young American pianist, noted for his Bach, performs all the preludes and fugues from Book I of "The Well-Tempered Clavier." (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. June 23 at 8.)

**GALLERY ARTS INDIA: "CHAMBER MUSIC PLUS"**
A new series in the Flatiron District, held in an intimate gallery space lined with Indian and other international contemporary art. This week's concert is a summer-solstice celebration featuring a rare performance of the original two-piano version of Holst's "The Planets," the incisive black-and-white etching the composer used as the basis for his Tech-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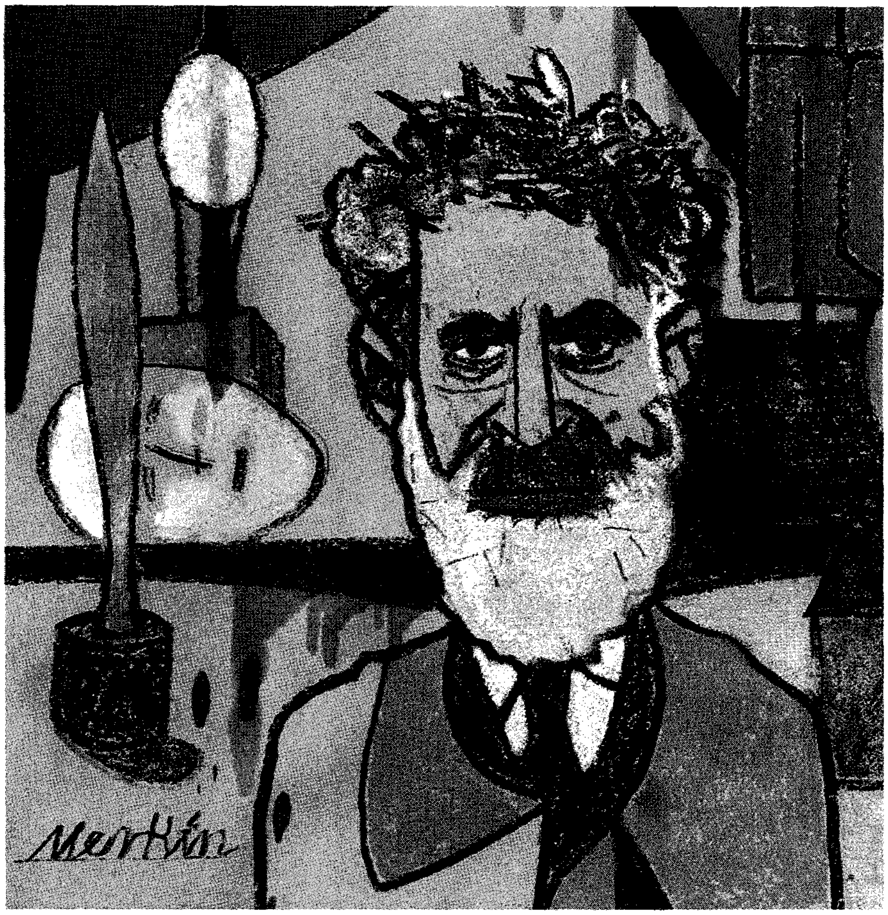
nicolor orchestral suite, by the pianists Margaret Kampmeier and Susan Sobolewski. (206 Fifth Ave., fifth floor. June 24 at 6:30. No tickets required.)

**BARGEMUSIC**
Jeffrey Swann undertakes the first installment of a survey of the Beethoven piano sonatas, presented in thematic programs. June 24 at 7:30: "The Virtuoso Pianist," a concert featuring the Sonata in C Major, Op. 2, No. 3, and the "Waldstein" Sonata. ♦ June 25 at 7:30: "A Look Toward the Past," including the Sonata in F Minor, Op. 2, No. 1, and the Sonata in B-Flat Major, Op. 22. ♦ June 26 at 7:30: The Sonata in D Major, Op. 28 ("Pastorale"), is the highlight in "The Grazioso Finale." ♦ June 27 at 4: "The Grand Emotional Gesture," the final concert, which features the "Les Adieux" and "Hammerklavier" Sonatas. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)



*"Constantin Brancusi: The Essence of Things," at the Guggenheim through Sept. 19.*

**GLASS FARM ENSEMBLE**
The game little sax-percussion-and-piano group—featuring the saxophonist Taimur Sullivan—performs recent works by Philippe Hurel ("Tombeau," for piano and percussion), Bruno Mantovani, and Toshio Hosokawa, along with Rzewski's humorous "Spots" (from 1986). (Tenri Cultural Institute, 43A W. 13th St. June 26 at 8. A donation is suggested.)

**BACHANALIA**
The violinist Nina Beilina's chamber orchestra begins each program with a bit of Bach. This one, an evening of cabaret music, will include a generous sampling of Russian and Gypsy folk songs along with songs by Poulenc, Schoenberg, and Weill (with the bass Anatoly Panchoshny and the countertenor Bruce Rameker). (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. June 28 at 7:30.)

**CENTRAL PARK BRASS**
A festive evening of music by Gabrieli, Joplin, and others, sponsored by the Naumburg Orchestral Concert Series. (Naumburg Band Shell, Central Park; enter at 72nd St. June 29 at 7:30. No tickets required.)

**CONSTANCE HAUMAN**
Hauman, an American coloratura busy in European opera houses (most recently with Olga Neuwirth's controversial David Lynch opera, "Lost Highway"), makes a specialty of the composers of the Viennese fin de siècle; her latest New York performances are a thrice-offered program of songs by Schoenberg (from "Brettl-Lieder," his cabaret collection), Schreker, Zemlinsky, and Berg (the "Seven Early Songs" and "Lulu's Lied"), presented in tandem with Yeshiva University Museum's exhibition "Vienna: Jews and the City of Music." The setting is the intimate blondwood concert hall at the Austrian Cultural Forum. (11 E. 52nd St. June 28-30 at 8. For free tickets, which are required, call 212-319-5300, ext. 222.)

## OUT OF TOWN

**CARAMOOR FESTIVAL**
This sylvan festival, appealingly diverse but lacking focus, has taken a bold step by hiring as its new general director Michael Barrett, the impeccably well connected pianist, conductor, and impresario who has proven his talents at the New York Festival of Song and at Utah's Moab Festival; expect a lot of thematic programming, a beefed-up opera schedule (under the direction of Will Crutchfield), and an occasional nod to the legacy of Leonard Bernstein. June 26 at 7: The season opener, the first of several "Latin Evenings," is led by the festival's principal conductor, Peter Oundjian—a concert of music by Rimsky-Korsakov, Falla ("Nights in the Gardens of Spain," with the pianist Cecile Licad), Sarasate (the tangy "Carmen Fantasy," with the violinist Jennifer Frautschi), and Ginastera. ♦ June 27 at 4:30: Rebel, one of the most exciting period-instrument bands around, shows its range with "From the French Court to the Cajun Kitchen," a program of Lully, Corrette, and some Louisiana gems performed with the Cajun singer and accordionist Jesse Legé. (Katonah, N.Y. 914-232-1252.)

**HUDSON VALLEY CHAMBER MUSIC CIRCLE**
A grand finale to Bard College's springtime season features the Juilliard String Quartet and some special friends (including the violinist Jaime Laredo and the cellist Sharon Robinson), who gather to perform Mendelssohn's Octet and Schoenberg's late-Romantic "Verklärte Nacht." (Olin Auditorium, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 518-537-6665. June 26 at 8.)

**NORFOLK CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL**
A concert featuring music by Copland (the Sextet), Aaron Jay Kernis, and Martin Bresnick, performed by the flutist Ransom Wilson, the pianist Lisa Moore, and the Norfolk Contemporary Ensemble, begins a week of new-music programs at the Yale School of Music's summer outpost. (Routes 44 and 272, Norfolk, Conn. 860-542-3000. June 26 at 8.)

**TANNERY POND CONCERTS**
For the photographer Christian Steiner's tony little series (held in an acoustically satisfying hall that was once a Shaker tannery), the cellist Daniel Gaisford and the pianist José Feghali perform music by Brahms. (Darrow School, Route 20, New Lebanon, N.Y. June 26 at 8. 888-820-1696.)

**MAVERICK CONCERTS**
Alexander Platt's second season as music director of the country's oldest summer chamber-music series is the Maverick's most eclectic in years; it begins with a concert by the Tokyo String Quartet, who offer performances of late quartets by Mozart and Beethoven (the Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132) and of Wolf's "Italian Serenade." (Woodstock, N.Y. June 27 at 3. For more information, call 845-679-8217.)

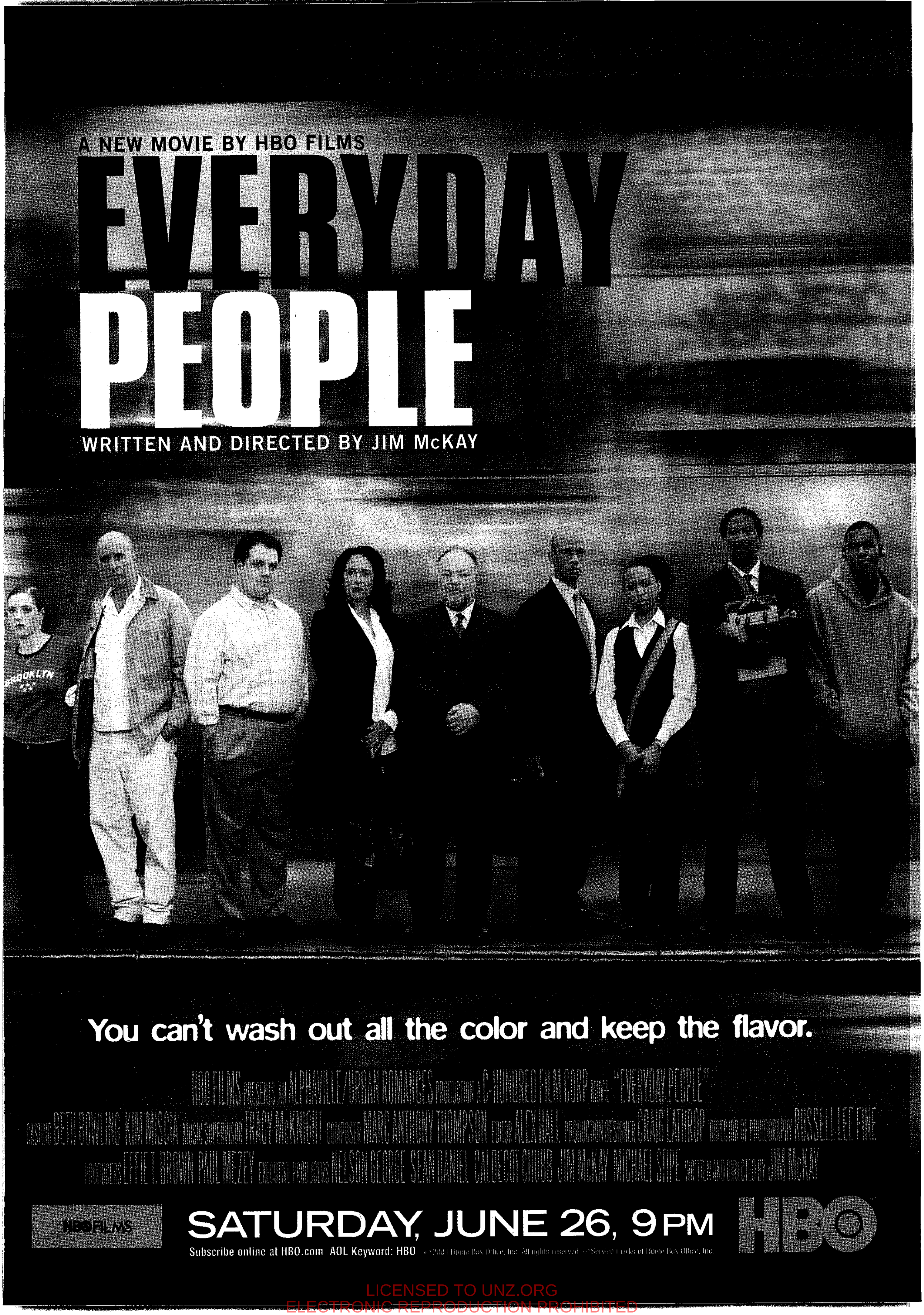
**MUSIC MOUNTAIN**
The venerable string-quartet festival, ensconced in a whitewashed shoebox hall with firm and clear acoustics, celebrates its seventy-fifth season. June 27 at 3: The Jacques Thibaud Trio, a young German string ensemble named in honor of the legendary French violinist, offers a program of works by Brehm (the String Trio, from 2002), Mozart, and Brahms (the Piano Quartet in G Minor, with the pianist Tao Lin). (Routes 63 and 126, Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126.)

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

**READINGS**
June 24 at 7:30: The Nuyorican Poets Café celebrates its thirtieth anniversary (see This Week). (Central Park SummerStage, Rumsey Playfield, Mid-Park at 72nd St. 212-360-2777.) ♦ June 24 at 8: The writers Robert Coover, Susan Choi, Elissa Schappell, Dave Eggers, and Rick Moody join forces with the musicians David Byrne and David Gates in a benefit for the tutoring organization 826NYC. The novelist Jonathan Ames is the host. (The Old First Reformed Church, 729 Carroll St., at Seventh Ave., Park Slope, Brooklyn. For more information, call 718-499-9884.) ♦ June 27 at 7: Lauren Grodstein offers selections from her novel, "Reproduction Is the Flaw of Love," Cathy Day reads from her short-story collection, "The Circus in Winter," and Claire Tristam reads from her novel, "After." (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

**TALKS**
June 23 at 7: Ed Park, an editor at the *Village Voice*, interviews the cartoonists and graphic novelists Chester Brown, Seth, and Adrian Tomine. (Barnes & Noble, 33 E. 17th St. No tickets necessary.) ♦ June 24 at 6:30: The *New Yorker* writer Mark Singer discusses his new book, "Somewhere in America: Under the Radar with Chicken Warriors, Left-Wing Patriots, Angry Nudists, and Others." (The Explorers Club, 46 E. 70th St. 212-628-8383.) ♦ June 28 at 8: Following the New York City première of "Before Sunset," Richard Linklater's sequel to his 1995 film "Before Sunrise," Linklater talks with the actors Ethan Hawke and Julie Delpy. (Directors Guild Theatre, 110 W. 57th St. For more information, call the American Museum of the Moving Image, at 718-784-4520.) ♦ June 29 at 7: The writer George Saunders talks with David Foster Wallace about his new short-story collection, "Oblivion." (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 212-260-2400.)

RICHARD MERKIN

A NEW MOVIE BY HBO FILMS

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# MOVIES OPENING

**FAHRENHEIT 9/11**
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening June 25. (Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 34th Street Theatre.)

**GHOSTLIGHT**
The actor Richard Move impersonates the modern-dance pioneer Martha Graham, in an experimental drama about her life and work. Directed by Christopher Herrmann. Opening June 23. (Pioneer Theatre.)

**THE INTENDED**
Kristian Levring ("The King Is Alive") directed this period drama with Janet McTeer as a forty-year-old woman accompanying her young lover to a remote ivory-trading post. Opening June 25. (Sunshine Cinema.)

**KAENA: THE PROPHECY**
A computer-animated film from France about a rebellious teen-age girl in a land called Axis, a forest that floats in the clouds. The voice cast includes Kirsten Dunst, Richard Harris, and Anjelica Huston. Directed by Chris Delaporte. Opening June 25. (Village East Cinemas.)

**THE NOTEBOOK**
Nick Cassavetes directed this adaptation of the Nicholas Sparks novel about a young couple separated by the Second World War. With Ryan Gosling, Rachel McAdams, James Garner, Gena Rowlands, and James Marsden. Opening June 25.

**TIME OF THE WOLF**
A drama set in a postapocalyptic Europe, in which a family flees to their country house for food and shelter. With Isabelle Huppert, Béatrice Dalle, Patrice Chéreau, and Olivier Gourmet. Directed by Michael Haneke ("The Piano Teacher"). In French. Opening June 25. (Cinema Village.)

**TWO BROTHERS**
Jean-Jacques Annaud ("The Bear") directed this story of two tiger cubs who are separated shortly after birth. With Guy Pearce. Opening June 25.

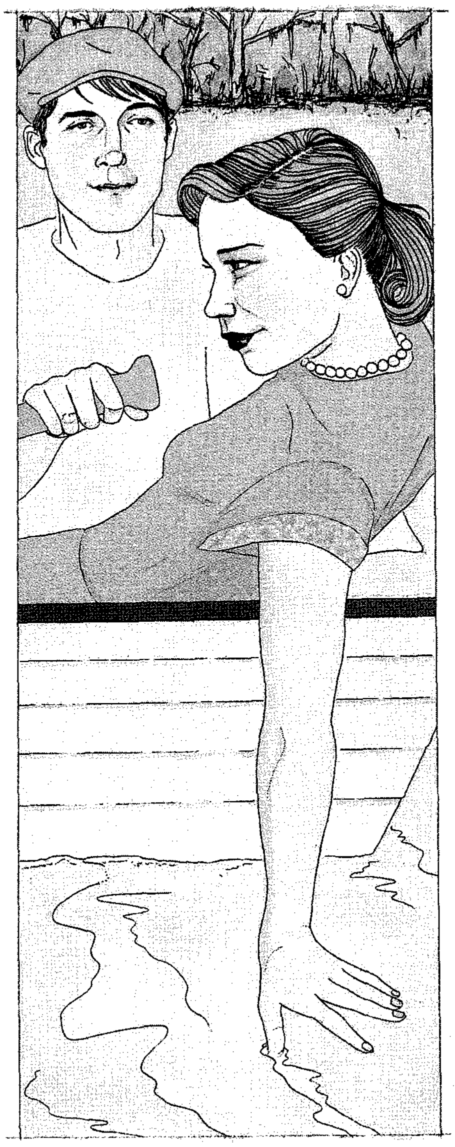
**WHITE CHICKS**
A comedy directed by Keenen Ivory Wayans, in which Marlon and Shawn Wayans play F.B.I. agents who disguise themselves as white women in order to protect a pair of hotel heiresses. Opening June 23.

# FILM NOTES

**THE CHRONICLES OF RIDDICK**
David Twohy, a writer and director who has done some terrific work in the past ("Below," "The Arrival"), crash-lands in this bloated sequel to his lean and mean 2000 sci-fi adventure, "Pitch Black." Vin Diesel returns to star as Riddick, a snarling antihero ex-con who, this time, is out to save the universe from evil. Huh? The overwhelming use of digital effects obliterates the story—a convoluted plot about an armored, half-dead army called necromongers who embark on a holy crusade. The action is non-stop and the sets are massive—it's an expensive production—but everything is photographed so murkily that the film seems mired in its own excess.—*Bruce Diones* (Battery Park 11, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

**COFFEE AND CIGARETTES**
Cinematic doodles from the writer-director Jim Jarmusch. The movie, seventeen years in the making, consists of a series of black-and-white vignettes involving caffeine and nicotine. While those two substances complement each other, Jarmusch, ever the hip mad scientist, throws together odd combinations of actors and singers. Some pairings—like the laconic comic Steven Wright and the Italian yo-yo Roberto Benigni—turn out to be duds, but other encounters—like the one between the hip-hoppers the RZA and the GZA and a woozy Bill Murray—have a singular, irreproducible chemistry. Jarmusch doesn't have any grand theme; he's just playing around. With Alfred Molina, Steve Coogan, Cate Blanchett, and Taylor Mead, who gives the film a wonderful valedictory moment when he mysteriously hears Mahler's "I Have Lost Track of the World."—*Michael Agger* (BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

**CONTROL ROOM**
A documentary, directed by Jehane Noujaim, about Al Jazeera, the Arab television station that pulls in forty million viewers without a single game show. The film was made during the invasion of Iraq by Coalition forces, an event that it covers from an angle not entirely shared by Fox News. On every side, there was a measure of wishful thinking; the staff at Al Jazeera, for example, most of them perspicacious and engaging in the extreme, appear genuinely dumbstruck when reports stating that American forces have reached the heart of Baghdad turn out to be true. More surprising still, the pivotal figure in the picture is an American—Lieutenant Josh Rushing, a press officer, who gives the Al Jazeera side of the argument a far more sympathetic hearing than the White House would consider wise. In fact, the film itself is more judicious in its choice of talking heads than in its delivery of basic information; by the end, we still know dangerously little about the origins, schedules, and funding of the station. Those who know Al Jazeera only as a bête noire of the Secretary of Defense, however, will relish the chance to see inside.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 5/24/04.) (Cinema 2, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)



*Ryan Gosling and Rachel McAdams in "The Notebook," opening June 25.*

LARA TOMLIN

**CRIES AND WHISPERS**
Ingmar Bergman's dream play is set in a manor house at the turn of the century where a spinster in her late thirties (Harriet Andersson) is dying. Her two sisters (Ingrid Thulin and Liv Ullmann) have come to attend her, and they watch and wait, along with a peasant servant (Kari Sylwan). The movie is built out of a series of emotionally charged images that express inner stress, and Bergman handles them with the fluidity of a master. Superbly photographed by Sven Nykvist in a style suggesting Edvard Munch, and with blood-red backgrounds, the film is smooth and hypnotic; it has oracular power and the pull of a dream. Yet there's a nineteenth-century dullness at the heart of it. Each sister represents a different aspect of woman—woman viewed as the Other—and the film mingles didacticism with erotic mystery. Originally released in 1972. In Swedish.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; June 25-27.)

**THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW**
A cautionary tale disguised as a disaster flick. Roland Emmerich, who gave us aggressive aliens in "Independence Day" and unhelpfully large lizards in "Godzilla," has turned his attention to global warming—a foe so unsatisfying that you can't even shoot it down. Jack Hall (Dennis Quaid) is a climatologist who realizes, as a slice of the polar ice cap slides into the sea, that the end of the world is nigh. Needless to say, nobody believes him until it's too late, by which time Los Angeles is being danced upon by tornadoes and New York is doing a convincing impersonation of a frozen Daiquiri. Millions perish, but that is not the problem. The problem is that Jack, based in Washington, needs badly to bond with his moony son (Jake Gyllenhaal), who is sitting tight in the New York Public Library with plenty to read and a cozy fellow-student (Emmy Rossum) to keep him warm. Meanwhile, the rest of the population is hurrying south to Mexico. The special effects rely less on credibility than on bombast, and the whole project is so dumb, ill-written, and condescending that it may become counterproductive, with viewers fleeing the cinema and vowing never to recycle again.—*A.L.* (6/7/04) (Battery Park 11, Chelsea West, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

**HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN**
Just like the books that the films are based on, this franchise gets better with each installment. The stodgy picture-frame direction (by Chris Columbus) of the previous films gets replaced by the darker and more intimate storytelling style of the Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón. The impressively dense plot of J. K. Rowling's novel has her apprentice sorcerers turning into grousing teen-agers, and the movie uses that to good effect as they track down a murderous warlock who means to do Harry harm. This time around there's also a more rousing spirit to the big-name British cast, which now includes Gary Oldman, David Thewlis, and Emma Thompson. Most important, Alan Rickman returns as Professor Snape—his performance is slithering perfection.—*B.D.* (Astor Plaza, Battery Park 11, Chelsea

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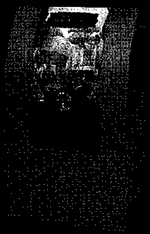

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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cinemas, Cinema 1, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

**NAPOLEON DYNAMITE**

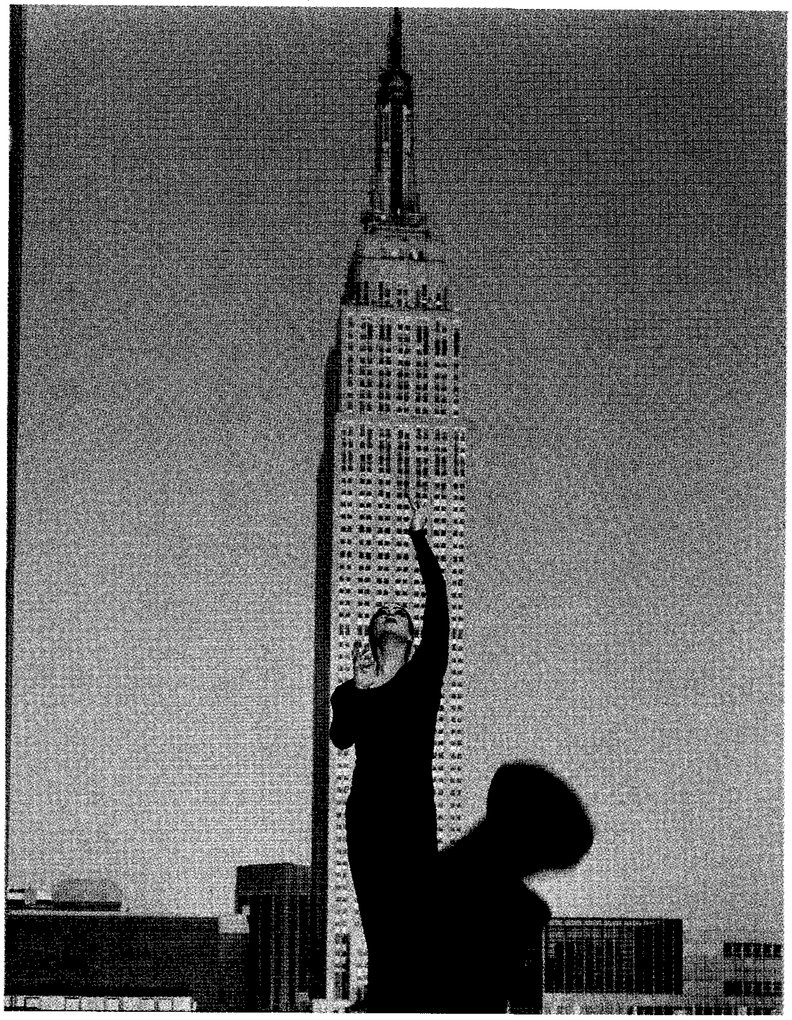
Deadpan Idaho Dada. The very young married team of Jared Hess (writer and director) and Jerusha Hess (writer), working in Preston, Idaho, Jared's home town, dig into the weird, flat tonalities of loserdom. Their hero, Napoleon (Jon Heder), a high-school senior, can't find anyone to play tetherball with him and gets ritually slammed into lockers by the school toughs. Yet Napoleon is oddly self-possessed; he speaks with an indignant snarl and confronts people without doing them the honor of opening his eyes and looking at them. The Hesses surround this stubborn nerd with wan dreamers and dim failures who don't see themselves as failures—their inexplicable belief in themselves is the movie's most hopeful element. Many of the scenes are brief vignettes punctuated with intentionally awkward physical comedy. The Hesses make jokes out of affectlessness and drabness—the nowheresville prefab tackiness of the houses and the emptiness of a patch of country so remote that not even popular culture touches it. The movie might have worked if it weren't so dead-aired, malicious, and cool.—*David Denby* (Lincoln Square and Sunshine Cinema.)

**SAVED!**

Mary (Jena Malone), a sweet-natured senior at the fundamentalist American Eagle Christian High School, in Maryland, tries to rescue the soul of her gay boyfriend by sleeping with him and winds up pregnant. A small-scale production, this satirical comedy, written by Brian Dannelly and Michael Urban and directed by Dannelly, folds its barbs into a formulaic teen movie. The setting is a suburban town that seems to have been scrubbed with a strong moral disinfectant, and the picture features the usual quarrels, flirtations, and pranks, culminating at the prom. Its villain, the pious Hilary Faye (Mandy Moore), who drops the Saviour's name into every third sentence, is the customary blond bitch who has everything going for her but wants more power. The heroes are the school's irregulars, who receive Mary as a friend—Patrick (Patrick Fugit), a Christian skateboarder; Cassandra (Eva Amurri), "the first Jew at American Eagle," a cocky prankster who speaks in tongues at a school assembly; and Hilary's brother Roland (Macaulay Culkin), who is wheelchair-bound and witty. Urban and Dannelly's script is too gentle and uncomplicated to be first-rate satire, but the movie has an affectionate, easy way about it that is very pleasing.—*D.D.* (5/31/04) (Chelsea West, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, 64th and 2nd, and Union Square.)

**THE STEPFORD WIVES**

This updated version of the Ira Levin novel, first adapted for the movies (drearily) in 1975, is bright and funny for about an hour. A bunch of drippily unattractive and frightened husbands, retreating to the wealthy, bland Connecticut town of Stepford, turn their high-powered wives into perfect slave robots. The script, by Paul Rudnick, and the set design, by Jackson De Govia, transform Levin's thriller material into spoof. The dresses of the robot wives are a riot of patterned gingham, the wives' exercises, as choreographed by Patricia Birch, imitate the gently spinning movements of washing machines, and the sparkling mansions are high-windowed and strewn with flowers. In essence, the movie represents Rudnick's riff on the square world, which he takes to be everywhere outside of New York. The heroines include two yet to be robotized women—Bette Midler, slamming into scenes like a runaway truck, and Nicole Kidman, who has energy and spark. But Matthew Broderick, as her husband, a Caspar Milquetoast with a flap of hair falling over his forehead, never seems to get into the movie at all, and, somewhere in the middle, the rusty gothic-horror mechanics underneath the comedy bring everything to a grinding halt. With Glenn Close and Christopher Walken, giving their all as the smoothly malicious leaders of Stepford. Directed, shakily, by Frank Oz.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 11, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)



*Richard Move as Martha Graham in "Ghostlight," opening June 23.*

JASON SCHMIDT

**THE STORY OF THE WEEPING CAMEL**

Set in the Gobi Desert, this film about a family of nomadic herders has a satisfying documentary appeal. The story, about a camel that, after a difficult delivery, refuses to nurse her young colt, and the ageless methods the Mongolian shepherds use to right the situation, is blessedly simple. There's little use of dialogue; instead the filmmakers (two Munich film-school students named Byambasuren Davaa and Luigi Falorni) linger on the everyday tending of livestock and the herders' astonishingly calm domestic life. The movie, an authentic and warm experience, details a peacefulness that's purely comforting. In Mongolian.—*B.D.* (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinema.)

**SUPER SIZE ME**

Fascinating and nauseating. As a life-style stunt, the documentary filmmaker Morgan Spurlock eats only at McDonald's for thirty days. It's not a happy set of meals: he puts on twenty pounds, develops heart palpitations, and is rendered impotent (much to the smirking dismay of his vegan girlfriend). While even "heavy users" of McDonald's don't eat fast food as often as Spurlock does during the experiment, he becomes an overweight case in point that Big Macs and their brethren have contributed to the supersizing of Americans. Even more worrying are Spurlock's forays into school cafeterias, which have become nutritional wastelands. He tells this toxic story with visual flair and the statistical punch of an inspired muckraker. And, if you want to eat something after the movie, be sure to look away during the shots of stomach-reducing surgery.—*M.A.* (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Square, and 72nd Street East.)

**SWEET SIXTEEN**

A drama that explores what drives kith and kin together and apart—and plays out the moral trajectory of "The Godfather" with juveniles and small-time thugs in Greenock, Scotland. This 2002 feature ranks with the socially conscious British filmmaker Ken Loach's best work since his legendary coming-of-age movie, "Kes" (1969). Loach attunes his mikes and cameras to a complex and appealing central character, Liam (Martin Compston), whose mother has been serving a prison term on a drug rap she took for her latest low-life boyfriend. Liam dreams of salvaging his mother's life—but to give his family a fresh start he moves from peddling smokes to pushing heroin and becomes part of the local crime syndicate. The title, of course, carries a wicked sting; the film proves fiercely bittersweet.—*Michael Sragow* (BAM Rose Cinemas; June 29.)

**THE TERMINAL**

As Viktor Navorski, a stolid, jazz-loving bachelor from Eastern Europe, Tom Hanks speaks only a few words of English and walks with his feet turned out in a rapid waddle. He puts on a good show in difficult circumstances: Viktor's tiny country has fallen into chaos, and he's left stranded and stateless at JFK airport. For months, he sleeps in a lounge, scrounges for food and work, and carries on a wan flirtation with a slightly masochistic "stew" (Catherine Zeta-Jones) who is touched by his gentleness. Viktor's nemesis, an ambitious customs bureaucrat (Stanley Tucci), tries to stymie him, but the phantom of the terminal turns into a modern-day Robinson Crusoe, exercising his resourcefulness not in the natural world but in a peculiar corner of Western consumer society. "The Terminal" is essentially an exploration of the inner life of an airport—the humming lights and glaring emptiness of the late-night lounges, the quirks of the food-service and maintenance men who become Viktor's allies, suppliers, and then his adoring fans. Steven Spielberg directs this fable with his customary fluency and warmth, and the movie has some charming passages—a dinner party served by the maintenance men is a highlight—but the narrative lacks drive and a serious reason to exist. The time passes pleasantly, but one feels that only Hanks' talent and Spielberg's enormous facility are keeping the movie alive.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 11, Beekman, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, Village Theatre VII, and Ziegfeld.)

## ALSO PLAYING

**BAADASSSSS!** (5/31/04)
Empire 25 and Village East Cinemas.
**BUKOWSKI: BORN INTO THIS**
Cinema Village.
**DODGEBALL: A TRUE UNDERDOG STORY**
Battery Park 11, Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.
**THE FIVE OBSTRUCTIONS**
Film Forum.
**I'LL SLEEP WHEN I'M DEAD**
Angelika Film Center and New York Twin.
**THE SADDEST MUSIC IN THE WORLD** (5/10/04)
Quad Cinema.
**TROY** (5/17/04)
Battery Park 11, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.

## THEATRE ADDRESSES

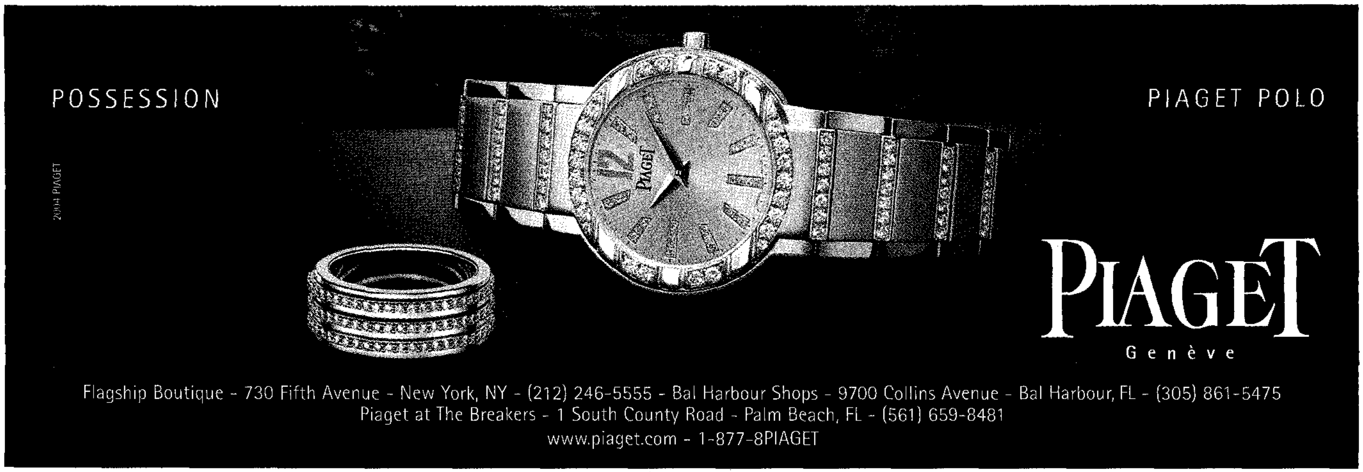
*Unless noted, call 212-777-FILM for show times.*

**Angelika Film Center,** 18 W. Houston St.
**Astor Plaza,** 44th St. at Broadway.
**BAM Rose Cinemas,** 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
**Battery Park 11,** West St. at Vesey St.
**Beekman,** Second Ave. at 66th St.
**Chelsea Cinemas,** 260 W. 23rd St.
**Chelsea West,** 333 W. 23rd St.
**Cinemas 1, 2, and 3,** Third Ave. at 60th St.
**Cinema Village,** 22 E. 12th St. (212-924-3363).
**East 86th Street Cinemas,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**84th Street Sixplex,** Broadway at 84th St.
**Empire 25,** on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (212-398-3939).
**59th Street East Cinema,** 239 E. 59th St.
**Film Forum,** W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110).
**First & 62nd Cinemas,** 400 E. 62nd St.
**42nd Street E Walk,** 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
**Kips Bay Theatre,** Second Ave. at 32nd St.
**Lincoln Plaza Cinemas,** Broadway at 63rd St. (212-757-2280).
**Lincoln Square,** Broadway at 68th St.
**New York Twin,** Second Ave. at 66th St.
**19th Street East 6,** Broadway at 19th St.
**Orpheum VII,** Third Ave. at 86th St.
**Paris,** 4 W. 58th St. (212-688-3800).
**Pioneer Theatre,** 155 E. 3rd St. (212-254-3300).
**Quad Cinema,** 34 W. 13th St.
**72nd Street East,** Third Ave. at 71st St.
**64th and 2nd,** Second Ave. at 64th St.
**62nd & Broadway,** 62 W. 62nd St.
**Sunshine Cinema,** 143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182).
**Sutton 1 and 2,** Third Ave. at 57th St.
**34th Street Theatre,** 312 W. 34th St.
**Union Square,** Broadway at 13th St.
**Village East Cinemas,** Second Ave. at 12th St.
**Village Theatre VII,** Third Ave. at 11th St.
**Ziegfeld,** 141 W. 54th St.

## REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

*Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.*

**AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE**
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—World-cinema Fridays. June 25 at 7:30: "Bariwali (The Lady of the House)" (1999, Rituparno Ghosh; in Hindi). ♦ Through June 27: A Cary Grant retrospective, featuring the actor's collaborations with the director Stanley Donen. June 26 at 2: "Indiscreet" (1958). ♦ June 26-27 at 4: "Charade" (1963). ♦ June 27 at 2: "The Grass Is Greener" (1961). ♦ Repertory nights. June 26-27 at 6:30: "Blow-Up" (1966, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian).
**ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES**
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5110)—The New York Asian Film Festival 2004. June 23 at 6:30: "The Road Taken" (2003, Hong Gi-Seon; in Korean). ♦ June 23 at 8:30: "Please Teach Me English" (2003, Kim Sung-su; in Korean). ♦ June 24 at 6:30: "Antenna" (2003, Kazuyoshi Kumakiri; in Japanese). ♦ June 24 at 7: "Running on Karma" (2003, Johnnie To and Wai Ka-fai; in Cantonese). ♦ June 24 at 9: "When the Last Sword Is Drawn" (2003, Yojiro Takita; in Japanese). ♦ June 24 at 9:30: "Legend of the Evil Lake" (2003, Lee Gwang-Hun; in Korean). ♦ June 25 at 6:30: "Like Asura" (2003, Yoshimitsu Morita; in Japanese). ♦ June 25 at 8:30: "Macabre Case of Prom Pi Ram" (2003, Manop Udomdej; in Thai). ♦ June 25 at 9: "Azumi" (2003, Ryuhei Kitamura; in Japanese). ♦ June 25 at 10:30: "Marronnier" (2003, Hideyuki Kobayashi; in Japanese). ♦ June 26 at 4: "Drive" (2002, Sabu; in Japanese). ♦ June 26 at 4:30: "Zatoichi 3: New Tale of Zatoichi" (1963, Tokuzo Tanaka; in Japanese). ♦ June 26 at 6: "Vibrator" (2003, Ryuichi Hiroki; in Japanese). ♦ June 26 at 6:30: "Zatoichi 4: The Fugitive" (1963, Tanaka; in Japanese).
**BAM ROSE CINEMAS**
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—Through June 30: The *Village Voice* film series. June 23 at 4:30, 6:45, and 9:30: "Spider" (2002, David Cronenberg). ♦ June 24 at 4:30, 6:45, and 9: "The Son" (2002, Jean-Pierre Dardenne and Luc Dardenne; in French). ♦ June 25 at 2, 4:30, 6:45, and 9: "Friday Night" (2002, Claire Denis; in French). ♦ June 26 at 2 and 6:45: "No Rest for the Brave" (2003, Alain Guiraudie; in French). ♦ June 27 at 2 and 6:45: "Four Shades of Brown" (2003, Tomas Alfredson; in Swedish). ♦ June 29 at 4:30, 6:45, and 9: "Sweet Sixteen" (†).
**BRYANT PARK**
Sixth Ave. at 42nd St.—Mondays, starting at dusk: free drive-in-style moviegoing. June 28: "The Thin Man" (1934, W. S. Van Dyke).
**FILM FORUM**
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Through July 1: An Ingmar Bergman retrospective. All films are in Swedish. June 23 at 1, 2:45, 4:30, 6:15, 8, and 9:45: "Hour of the Wolf" (1968). ♦ June 24 at 1:40, 5:20, and 9: "Sawdust and Tinsel" (1953). ♦ June 24 at 3:30 and 7:10: "A Lesson in Love" (1954). ♦ June 25-27 at 1, 3:05, 5:15, 7:30, and 9:45: "Cries and Whispers" (†). ♦ June 28 at 1:30, 5:20, and 9:10: "The Devil's Eye" (1960). ♦ June 28 at 3:15 and 7:05: "Secrets of Women" (1952). ♦ June 29 at 1:50, 5:15, and 8:45: "Brink of Life" (1957). ♦ June 29 at 3:30 and 7: "Dreams" (1955). ♦ Starting June 23: "Première Brazil!," a selection of Brazilian films, curated by MOMA. All films are in Portuguese. June 23 at 1, June 25 at 8, and June 27 at 10: "Lives of Rhyme" (2003, Guilherme Coelho). ♦ June 23 at 3 and June 28 at 9:30: "The Prisoner of the Iron Bars" (2003, Paulo Sacramento). ♦ June 23 at 5:30, June 24 at 8, and June 28 at 1: "Glauber the Movie, Labyrinth of Brazil" (2003, Silvio Tendler). ♦ June 23 at 8, June 24 at 10, June 25 at 3:30, June 26 at 1, June 27 at 8, June 28 at 3, and June 29 at 8: "Born to Be Blind" (2003, Roberto Berliner). ♦ June 23 at 10, June 24 at 3, June 25 at 5:45, June 26 at 8, June 27 at 1, June 28 at 7:30, and June 29 at 1: "Daughters of the Wind" (2004, Joel Zito Araujo). ♦ June 24 at 1 and June 29 at 10: "The Bandit" (1953, Lima Barreto). ♦ June 24 at 5:30, June 25 at 1, June 26 at 10, and June 29 at 5:30: "God Is Brazilian" (2003, Carlos Diegues). ♦ June 25 at 10, June 26 at 3, June 27 at 3, and June 28 at 5: "The Story Tellers" (2002, Eliane Caffé).
**SUNSHINE CINEMA**
143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182)—Midnight movies. June 25-26: "Bullitt" (1968, Peter Yates).
**THALIA THEATRE**
Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—June 26-27 at 1 and 6:30: "My Architect" (2003, Nathaniel Kahn). ♦ June 26-27 at 3:30 and 9: "City of God" (2002, Fernando Meirelles; in Portuguese).
**WALTER READE THEATRE**
Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Starting June 25: "Bruno Ganz: The European Friend." A retrospective of the Continental actor's film work. June 25 at 1:30, June 26 at 4, June 27 at 8:15, and June 28 at 3:15: "Wings of Desire" (1987, Wim Wenders; in German). ♦ June 25 at 4:15 and 9, June 26 at 6:45, and June 27 at 2: "Truth and Lies" (2002, Piergiorgio Gay; in Italian). ♦ June 26 at 2 and June 27 at 4: "Behind Me" (2002, Norbert Wiedmer; in German). ♦ June 26 at 9, June 27 at 6, and June 28 at 1 and 6: "Circle of Deceit" (1981, Volker Schlöndorff; in German).



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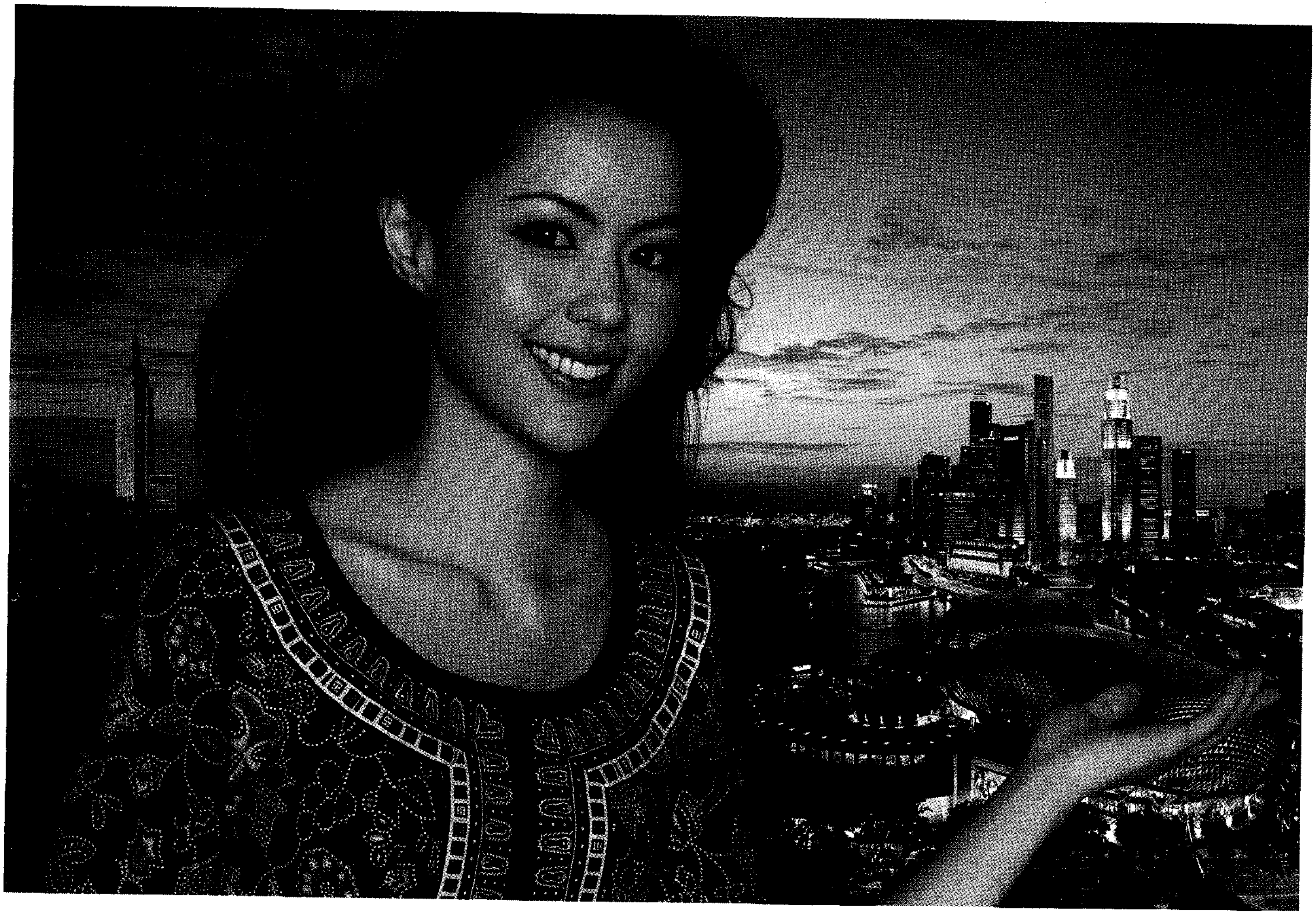

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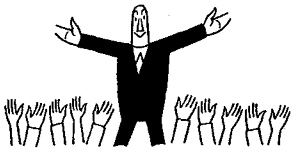
# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

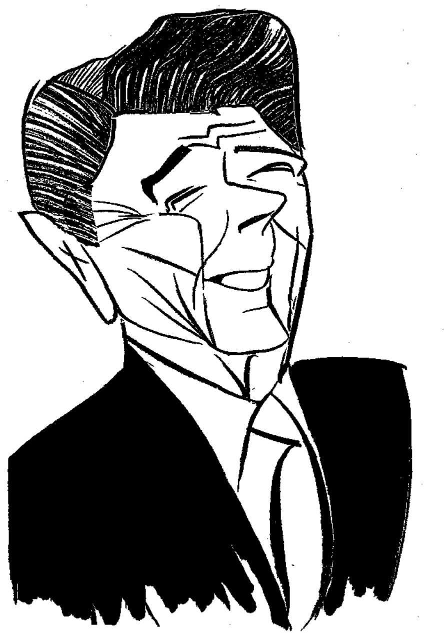
## COMMENT
## WINNER



On January 20, 1981, the day a sixty-nine-year-old ex-movie star, ex-TV host, ex-liberal Democrat, ex-radio commentator, and ex-California governor named Ronald Reagan took the oath of office as the fortieth President of the United States, some eighty-five thousand Soviet soldiers and airmen, armed with tanks and helicopter gunships, were laying waste to Afghanistan—the first time Moscow had invaded a country outside the line established by the furthest advance of the Red Army at the end of the Second World War. In the Soviet Union proper, Leonid Brezhnev's bureaucratic apparatus maintained a corrupt, often cruel, and apparently impregnable stagnation. There was anti-American turmoil in Iran and Central America, among other places. To many people, it appeared that Soviet power was on the march, America in retreat.

Eight years later, as President Reagan prepared to hand over the White House to his Vice-President and designated successor, George H. W. Bush, astonishing things were happening on the other side of the world. Moscow's empire was shrivelling. The Soviet troops had almost all pulled out of Afghanistan, and not just Afghanistan: fifty thousand were going home from Eastern Europe, taking their nuclear missiles with them. The Soviet Union was changing in ways that went far, far beyond any of the "thaws" of the past. A rambunctious press wasn't just criticizing "errors" and "excesses"; it was lampooning the very idea of the "vanguard party" and historical materialism itself. "Doctor Zhivago," serialized in literary journals, was being devoured by millions; even more wondrously, so were "Darkness at Noon" and "Animal Farm" and "1984." Within a year, the Berlin Wall would be rubble. A year or two after that, Leningrad would be St. Petersburg again, Boris Yeltsin would be elected President of Russia on an explicitly anti-Communist platform, and the Soviet Union, bloodlessly and without much fanfare, would simply go out of business.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL



The Cold War had been almost universally assumed to be a permanent condition. Someday, no doubt, it would end, as all things do. But if it ended quickly it would end catastrophically, in a nuclear conflagration that would take both sides down with it, along with untold millions of people; and if it ended slowly its end would come so far in the future as to be hardly worth thinking about. Among foreign-policy élites, American and European alike, no one doubted the imperative for the West to maintain a military machine sufficient to deter open Soviet aggression, conventional or nuclear. There was bitter contention over how much was enough, and about the wisdom or necessity of small wars on the periphery, in places like Vietnam and Central America. But every American President from Truman through Carter believed, or acted as if he believed, that through some combination of firmness and restraint, of patient negotiation and occasional sharp confrontation, time could be bought that would allow the Soviet Union to evolve in such a way as eventually to make the Manichaean East-West struggle obsolete.

The group that came in with Ronald Reagan shared many of these assumptions, but with a different twist. During the commemorations of Reagan's life that followed his death, much was made of his optimism. The Reagan Administration, we were endlessly told, understood that the Soviet system was rotting from within, that it lacked the spiritual, economic, and political vigor that only democracy and free markets can provide, that it was weak and doomed, and that all that was needed to topple it was the finger-flick of some additional arms spending and a bit of ideological boldness on the part of the United States. In truth, however, the Reaganite view of the Cold War—at least, as represented by the likes of the Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger, and his deputy Richard Perle—was deeply pessimistic. That view was that the West was losing, militarily and spiritually. The Soviets had more troops, more tanks, and bigger missiles bristling with bigger warheads. And they had more will, bolstered by a militarized society and a belief in the inevitable triumph of Communism, while the West was effeminate and degenerate. In the White House, the book that "everyone" read (according to Peggy Noonan's memoir) was "How Democracies Perish," by Jean-François Revel, which described democracy as "a historical accident, a brief parenthesis that is closing before our eyes" because it allows peace movements and radicals to sap its ability to resist, whereas "Communist totalitarianism is both durable and immutable," because it "liquidates its internal enemies" and "uses methods that are simple and infallible because they are undemocratic." When Reagan called the Soviet Union an "evil empire" and "the focus of evil in the modern world," conservative and neoconservative commentators rejoiced that at last we had a President who had a moral vocabulary and a tragic sense of history, who recognized that some political systems are irredeemably tyrannical and aggressive, who rejected the contemptible claptrap that attributes every conflict to lack of communication. When Mikhail Gorbachev came along, these commentators, and many of their friends inside the Reagan Administration, saw the new Soviet leader as simply cleverer than his predecessors, and therefore more dangerous.

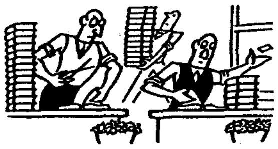
President Reagan blithely ignored all this. He was never much of a reader during his White House years, and one of the books he evidently didn't crack was Revel's. When Reagan said "evil," it turned out he just meant bad. He didn't really believe in immutable malevolence. The villains of Reagan's world were like the ones in Frank Capra's movies—capable of change once they saw the light. And, the way Reagan figured it, Gorbachev—with Reagan's help, of course—just might be seeing the light. Reagan, always lucky, was never luckier than to be on hand when a Soviet leader decided to lift the pall of fear and lies from his empire, thus permitting its accumulated absurdities and contradictions to come into plain view and to shake it to pieces. Like his postwar predecessors, Reagan did his part to maintain the external strategic conditions under which this could happen.

It took a while for some of Reagan's admirers to appreciate what he had accomplished, or what he had refused to hinder Gorbachev from accomplishing. When the Berlin Wall fell, ten months after Reagan left office, Dick Cheney, then Secretary of Defense to the first President Bush, smelled a rat. "We must not be euphoric," he warned darkly. Six months later, Frank Gaffney, a Reagan Defense Department official, told a conference of neoconservatives in Washington that "the Machiavellian schemes of Gorbachev" had brought the Soviets "closer to achieving their strategic goals than at any time since World War II." Not long after that, the Soviets achieved the strategic goal of nonexistence, and even the Cheneys and the Gaffneys had to recognize that it might not be just another masterly exercise in Communist disinformation. Still, fortune has been kind to such counsellors of fear. Sidelined at Reykjavik, hamstrung in the first Bush Presidency, they bided their time, waiting for an Administration propelled not by optimism but by anxiety. They have found one.

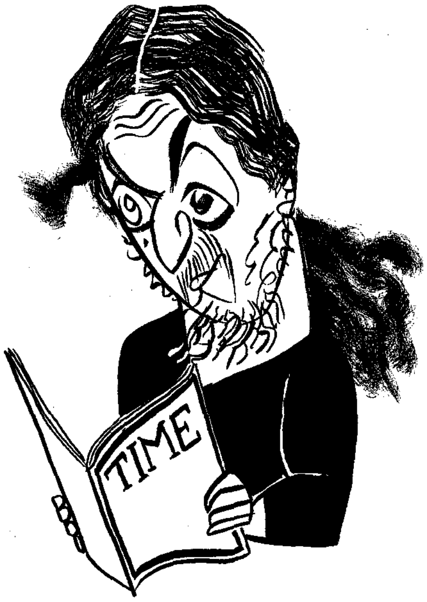
Ronald Reagan's domestic policies, like those of the current incumbent, were almost uniformly appalling. He shifted the tax burden downward, exacerbated economic inequality, created gigantic deficits, undermined environmental, civil-rights, and labor protections, neglected the AIDS epidemic, and packed the courts with reactionary mediocrities. He made callousness respectable. His foreign policy included such unsavory features as tolerating "death-squad activity" in El Salvador and Guatemala, arming Islamist extremists in Central Asia, cozying up to the apartheid regime in South Africa and the Saddam Hussein regime in Iraq, and, of course, secretly providing weapons to the Iranian mullahs in exchange for hostages and for cash that was then used to finance an unlawful war in Nicaragua. Reagan was a pretty poor President in a lot of ways. But because he recognized that something momentous was happening in the Soviet Union—because, against the advice of some of his lieutenants and to the consternation of some of his conservative admirers, he got out of Gorbachev's way—his Presidency, it's safe to guess, will forever, and deservedly, be remembered in a positive light.

—*Hendrik Hertzberg*

## IN OUR PRISONS
## TIME SERVED

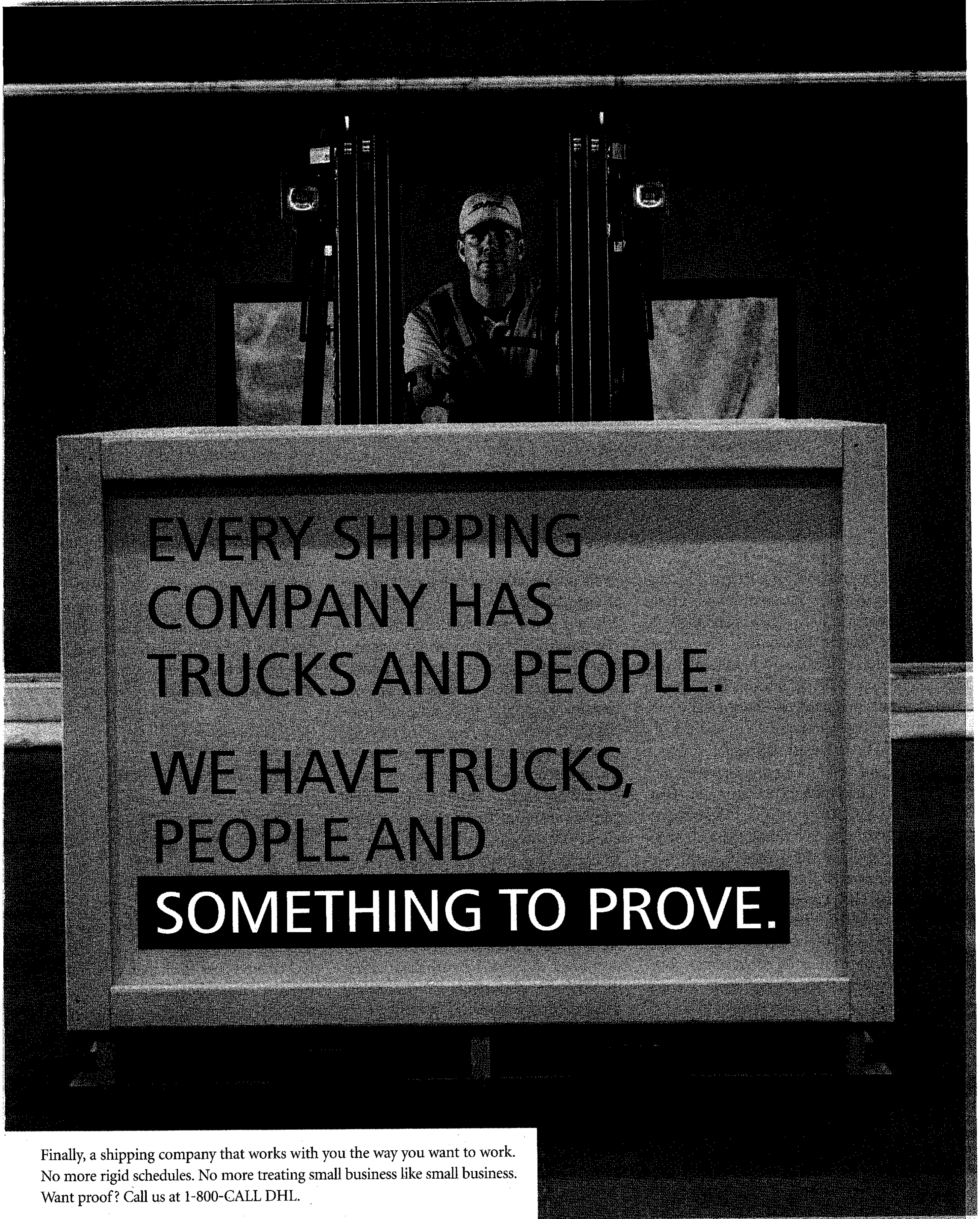


Some months ago, Betty Satterwhite, who edits the letters section at *Time*, got a call from a federal defender in Boston who was representing Richard Reid, the infamous shoe bomber, in a court appeal. Reid, it turned out, was a devoted *Time* reader, but he'd been having a little trouble with his subscription. As he awaited sentencing at the Massachusetts Correctional Institute, he began receiving peculiarly abridged editions of the magazine: the letters to the editor were always missing, as though they'd been torn out.



*Richard Reid*

In fact, they had—by F.B.I. agents responding to a series of "special administrative measures" issued by the Attorney General. Late last month, a federal court dismissed Reid's ongoing appeal to re-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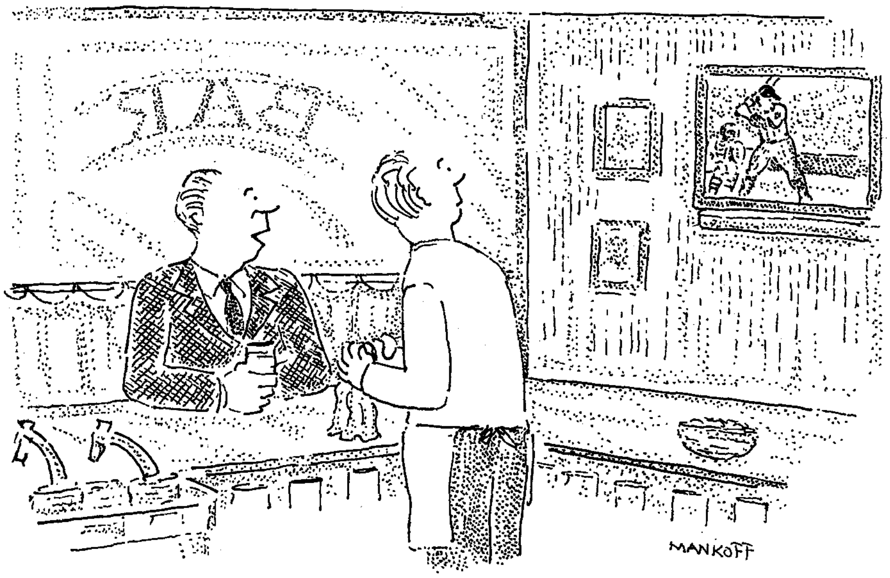


*"I'm probably in the minority, but I would've loved to see Mantle on steroids."*

• •

trieve his missing *Time* letters. This may not seem a great loss, but shouldn't Reid, as a paying customer, be entitled to see the entire magazine, including the feedback provided by the likes of Jennifer Barnard, of Apple Valley, California? ("I am nine months pregnant, and I was totally mesmerized by your report. The pictures of a baby's brain, heart, stomach, umbilical cord and other major organs were amazing.") The problem, according to Assistant U.S. Attorney Gary Katzmann, is this: Al Qaeda training manuals advocate sending coded messages through innocent-seeming media, and Reid is a confessed Al Qaeda member. "With the receipt of unfiltered materials," Katzmann said, "the concern is that somebody trained in code could send a communication through unfiltered avenues which contain hidden messages."

Reid's lawyers decided to challenge the "unfiltered" component of this formulation, which led them, eventually, to Betty Satterwhite. "Basically, for letters to be even considered for publication they have to be relevant to something we printed," Satterwhite explained last week. "So that excludes a whole lot of mail right off the bat." About fifty letters arrive each month, for instance, from prisoners requesting legal assistance or seeking to publicize the details of their cases. Satterwhite replies to these with a form letter.

"All told, we get around twelve hundred potentially publishable letters—things that are actually in English and relevant—in a given week," Satterwhite continued. "Of those, about twenty-five"—or two per cent—"are published." The selected letters are then heavily edited for space and style, and independently fact-checked. Any coded message dependent on specific word patterns—the first letter of alternating nouns, say—is therefore likely to be incomprehensibly garbled, assuming that it passes muster at all. In other words, it would be easier for Al Qaeda to plant an operative on *Time's* editorial staff.

The court granted that "there remains a substantial dispute between the parties concerning Reid's access to *Time*," but it dismissed the case nevertheless, citing the "mootness" doctrine ("No practical consequences would flow from the decision"), so hundreds of confiscated letters from alert *Time* readers remain in the custody of prison officials in Colorado, where Reid is now serving a life term.

"I was interested that, of all Mr. Reid's problems, getting a copy of *Time* unsliced was so prominent," Jim Kelly, the magazine's managing editor, said the other day, shortly after learning of the failed appeal. "My first reaction was 'A reader is a reader is a reader, so let's not discriminate.' And my second reaction was 'We're not trying to build a subscription base out of the prison population of the United States.'"

Kelly needn't worry too much about the latter, according to Richard Stratton, the founding editor and publisher of *Prison Life*, a defunct bimonthly magazine that billed itself as "the voice of the convict." "I remember that the most popular magazines in prison were *Penthouse* and *Hustler*," Stratton said last week. As it happens, Stratton is no stranger to correctional censorship, either. "With *Prison Life*, it was the letters and the personals," he said. "Sometimes the prison authorities would say that the inmates would use them as a way of communicating from prisoner to prisoner." The chief concern, in this instance, was gangs (particularly the Aryan Brotherhood), not terrorism, and even some of the featured content—such as an article about a prison escape achieved with the help of dental floss—was deemed too dangerous.

"We had a column called 'Ask Bubba,' which got some great letters," Stratton said. "Bubba was supposedly the con's con, and he'd give advice about things like what to do if your cellmate snored." Richard Reid, who is kept in isolation, would have little use for Bubba's advice on this score: "Pour warm soda up the guy's nose."

—*Ben McGrath*

### SH-H-H!

## WORSE THAN HIS BITE

Good schools, abundant day-care options, probably more discarded chicken bones per block than you'll find in any other town: the relative lack of green space notwithstanding, it was possible, until recently, to consider New York City an excellent place for dogs. That may soon change, however, now that Mayor Bloomberg has proposed a series of new noise-control amendments. Along with curtailing the excesses of ice-cream-truck drivers and dub-reggae enthusiasts, his plan calls for an enforced limit of ten minutes—five minutes at night—when it comes to barking dogs. After that, a dog's owner may be deemed in violation of the law and issued a ticket or a fine.

"There have typically been a lot of dog complaints to the 311 line," Jordan

Barowitz, the Mayor's spokesman, explained the other day. "Last month, for instance, there were eleven hundred and forty-nine calls under the category 'animal noise.' And then, let's see here, 'animal noise, chronic': four hundred and fourteen. That month was a bit heavier than April. September, October, it's very high. It drops in November, but it bounces back up in December. Maybe they get excited about the holidays."

Currently, the city's noise code reads, "No person shall permit an animal, including a bird, under his or her control to cause unnecessary noise." This, needless to say, is a little vague. "It produces problems from an enforcement standpoint," Barowitz said. The city's Department of Environmental Protection, which drafted the proposed legislation, examined the laws in several other cities before deciding on the ten-minute rule. Charles Sturcken, the D.E.P.'s public-affairs director, said, "Seattle has some of the more advanced measures in the country. Hawaii apparently has very quiet noise codes. Atlanta has a ten-minute-duration law anytime for barking, or up to half an hour for intermittent barking. Palo Alto, it's also ten minutes. We thought that was reasonable."

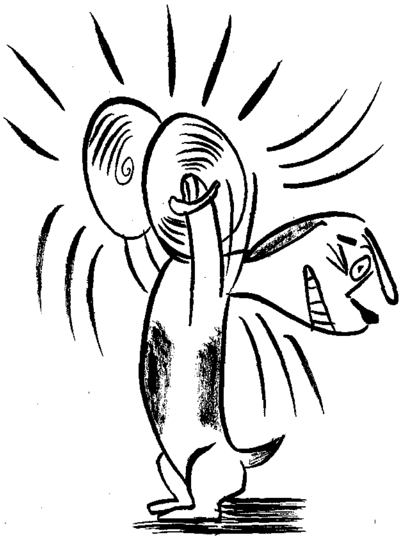
Reasonable for people, maybe. To a dog, the ten- and five-minute limits might seem arbitrary, and a little harsh: even in dog years, five minutes of barking is thirty-five minutes, which falls just short of the standard therapeutic hour. What's more, the Mayor's proposal ignores the archetype of the barking dog as hero ("Lassie, Dad's hurt! Get help!"), and the fact that raising a ruckus is what a lot of dogs have been bred to do.

Some breeds are more vocal than others. According to a study published in 1965 by the animal behaviorists John Paul Scott and John L. Fuller, the lowest "threshold of stimulation" belongs to the cocker spaniel. A cocker spaniel puppy fighting with a litter mate over a bone barked nine hundred and seven times in ten minutes. The quietest dog in the study was the African basenji, which almost never barks (the most vocal basenji racked up twenty low-pitched "woof"s in the bone-fight test), a trait the animal is believed to have developed over many generations of hiding from leopards. Jean Martin, a basenji breeder in Tully, New York, says that she gets a lot of calls from New Yorkers shopping for a barkless dog. "Basenjis don't bark, but they can scream. They can howl. And they can yodel."

It is not easy to stop a dog from barking. Though a recent study published in *Science* indicated that dogs may understand human language, in one case comprehending more than two hundred words, anecdotal evidence suggests that the phrases "Shut up," "Knock it off," and "Put a sock in it" are not among them. For that reason, counter-barking can be big business. Andrea Arden, a trainer, says, "I get probably two or three calls a day from people with a barking problem. They say, 'You need to get back to me immediately. I only get one more warning, and then I'm out of my building.'" The most popular quick fix is a special collar that emits a spray of citronella oil whenever its wearer barks (it is activated by sound vibrations). "Those are fine," Arden says. "But I'm worried people will resort to desperate measures—shock collars, tranquillizers, wiring the dog's mouth shut. The absolute cruellest thing you can do is debarking—that's when the vocal cords are cut. You hear about that a lot with beagles. I personally don't know any vets in town who do that, but it happens. And I have no doubt that the noise restrictions will mean people start giving their dogs up to shelters."

"I'm sure I'll be getting the calls," said Darryl Vernon, a lawyer in midtown, who for twenty years has represented dog owners in all kinds of legal actions. "The landlords will say, 'This is governmental ratification, and I'm going to use it to sue and evict dog owners and raise the rent.' Until now, I've never had a client get a violation from the city for barking. It's mainly for odors."

—*Eric Konigsberg*



*Loud dog*

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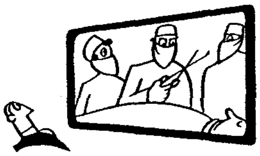
## THE PICTURES
## GROSS AND GROSSER



Fans of Japanese horror films appear to be related to those mysterious people who like to get out of their cars to inspect roadkill, or those who watch bypass surgery on public television—except that they are devotees of a much darker and weirder phenomenon. Grady Hendrix, a thirty-one-year-old former receptionist of conservative appearance, for example, doesn't seem like the kind of guy who would enjoy watching a man bite through his arm while masturbating inside a burlap sack, but he is. Hendrix, who lives in Spanish Harlem, imports the most repellent, vile movies from Asia as a hobby, and the depth of his demented knowledge is impressive. If you wanted to see, say, a naked man suspended from hooks so that his skin stretches, while someone pours boiling oil all over him and sticks needles through his cheeks, well, he knows just the movie for you.

For the past three years, Hendrix has helped put together the New York Asian Film Festival, which screens the latest "J-horror" sensations (as well as more conventional fare) at Anthology Film Archives, in the East Village. This year, he really wanted to show Takashi Miike's "Gozu," in which a gangster turns into a woman and then gives birth to a fully grown male during intercourse, but Miike has already acquired a legitimate U.S. distributor. Instead, Hendrix had to settle for "Marronnier," directed by Hideyuki Kobayashi, which is about a shut-in puppeteer who turns women into dolls that kill people. (The movie played twice in San Francisco, and a good portion of the audience walked out each time.) Hendrix isn't worried about its New York reception, however, because, he says, "the people in San Francisco are generally weak-willed sissies."

Hendrix, like many film buffs in New York, can trace his passion to Kim's Video, a store whose employees are notoriously smug about their esoteric tastes. He fell under the influence of a Kim's clerk named Barry Long, who told him about the Music Palace, a theatre in Chinatown that showed Asian films. Hendrix, who was then a student at New York University, went downtown, bought a six-dollar ticket for a double feature, and entered a strange world. "You'd look around and there'd be a family of nine behind you eating lunch and arguing over who gets the last dim sum," he says. "There'd be people sitting next to you working their way through their second pack of cigarettes. There was the cat man, who had nine cats tied to him on strings. And then there'd be the guy who sits in the balcony holding his hat and moaning whenever anything exciting happens onscreen."

Undaunted, Hendrix became a Music Palace regular, and after many years of happy patronage he began to hear rumors that the theatre was going to close. He and a few other "honkies," as he puts it—a Serbian computer specialist, a Chase Manhattan vice-president, a d.j., and a former union organizer—who frequented the Music Palace tried to raise money to save it. "We were worried that only the standard Chinese art flicks would make it over here," Hendrix says. "It's, like, 'Oh my God, I live in China and I'm a woman and it sucks. Oh my God, it's so hard to be alive.' Or those movies where people ride around in the backs of trucks for half the film just staring while someone plays guitar music."

When the Music Palace eventually closed, Hendrix and his friends each put up a thousand dollars and started the Asian Film Festival. The first year, 2000, was a modest success, but everything changed during year two, when Hendrix screened a Korean film called "The Isle" for members of the press. The movie contains what Hendrix calls "a moment of extreme fishhook penetration," and it was shortly after this part of the film that a critic emerged into the lobby, made a high-pitched gurgling noise, and passed out on the floor. Hendrix checked to see that the man was O.K. and then called the *Post*. The story was reprinted in other newspapers, and soon "The Isle" acquired a reputation as the most dangerous movie around.

The whiff of scandal that year brought larger, unsuspecting audiences to the screenings. Hendrix watched people being carried from the theatre by their friends; others claimed they'd seen things that weren't actually in the movies, such as a dog whose head is chopped off by a bear trap. The festival's success has had its downside: J-horror has become more and more mainstream, with several big-budget Hollywood remakes scheduled to open this year, which may well spell the end of Hendrix's film series, since he will no longer be able to wrest festival rights from the studios. He decided to splurge this time. "We teeter on the edge of financial ruin," he says. "So, like any good, self-destructing alcoholic, we want to go out in a blaze of glory."

—*Michael Agger*

## RETURN TO SENDER

## BRAINS

Early one morning not long ago, a man wearing a blue shirt and dark pants knocked on the closed door of the post office on Tenth Street, a few doors east of Sixth Avenue, in Greenwich Village. No one answered. He knocked again. No one answered. He waited. He peered through the glass to see if there was anyone inside. He kicked the bottom of the door with the side of his foot several times. A female postal worker came to the door and said through the glass, "O.K., O.K. Give me a minute."

The man waited as she unlocked the door and opened it. The postal worker also wore a blue shirt and dark pants. "Yes," she said. "How may I serve you?"

The man showed her a business-size envelope. "What is this?" he demanded.

The postal worker took the envelope and looked at it. "That's a letter," she said, and handed it back.

"It came back to me," the man said. "I paid eighty-three cents. It came back to me." He handed her the letter again.

The postal worker studied the envelope. "That ain't no address," she said. "An address is, like, 107 East Fourth Street."

"Yes, that is an address," said the man, raising his voice. He waved the letter at her. "It says, 'Library at Sixth Avenue and Tenth Street.' Don't your carriers have any brains?"

The postal worker said, "You have to take that up with the carrier. They deliver the mail. It don't say they got brains."

"There's only one library at Sixth Avenue and Tenth Street," the man said. "It's the only library there. It's the whole block."

The postal worker said, "A letter needs an address. That's no address."

The man's eyes narrowed. "Why couldn't the letter carrier deliver it?"

The postal worker answered, "You said yourself the letter carrier has no brains."

"I paid eighty-three cents," the man said.

"I can't do anything about that."

"Who can?"

"You have to go to Old Chelsea."

"What's Old Chelsea?"

"A post office."

"This is a post office. My post office," said the man, his voice rising again.

The postal worker assured him, "Old Chelsea will take care of you."

"Where is Old Chelsea?"

"Eighteenth Street west of Seventh Avenue."

"That's not an address," the man said.

"Just go there. You'll find it," the postal worker said.

"The library is just across Sixth Avenue. What if I walked my letter over there?" the man asked.

"You could do that," the postal worker said.

"But what about my eighty-three cents?" the man asked.

"I can't help you with that. What's in that letter anyway?" the postal worker asked.

"I was complaining about the service," the man said.

"That's you, all right," the postal worker said, and she opened the doors of the post office for regular business. "Have a nice day, sir," she added, and disappeared inside.

The man looked at his envelope, turned, and walked to the corner. He crossed Sixth Avenue, walked up the stairs to the library, and pulled on the door handle. The door was locked. He peered inside. He knocked. He waited. Nothing happened. He walked halfway down the library steps and sat down to wait.

—*Marshall Efron*

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POSTSCRIPT

# THE UNKNOWABLE

*Ronald Reagan's amazing, mysterious life.*

BY EDMUND MORRIS

There they lie in their guttered drawers, projecting from the rosewood desk I had specially made for them: four yards of cards, each eight inches wide, five inches tall, most of them with his initials handwritten, headline style, in the top left-hand corner, from "RR'S BIRTH ZODIAC—FEB. 6, 1911" to "RR DIES OF PNEUMONIA—JUNE 5, 2004." In between these two extremes, some eighteen thousand cards document whatever I was able to find out about thirty-four thousand of Ronald Reagan's days. Which leaves sixteen thousand days unaccounted for. Lost leaves. "The leavings of a life," as D. H. Lawrence might say.

I once planned to show Reagan this card file, just to see him react as drawer after drawer rolled out yard by yard, green tabs demarcating his years, yellow tabs his careers, blue tabs his triumphs and disappointments. He could have looked down, as it were, on the topography of his biography, and seen the shoe salesman's son moving from town to town across northern Illinois, in the teens of the last century; the adolescent achieving some sort of stability at Dixon High School in 1924; the Eureka College student and summer lifeguard through 1933; then, successively—each divider spaced farther from the next, as he grew in worldly importance—the Des Moines sportscaster and ardent New Dealer; the Hollywood film star; the cavalry officer and Air Corps adjutant; the postwar union leader and anti-Communist; the television host and corporate spokesman for General Electric; the governor of California, 1967-75; the twice-defeated, ultimately successful candidate for his party's Presidential nomination; and, last, the septuagenarian statesman, so prodigiously carded that the nine tabs "1981" through "1989" stand isolated like stumps in snow.

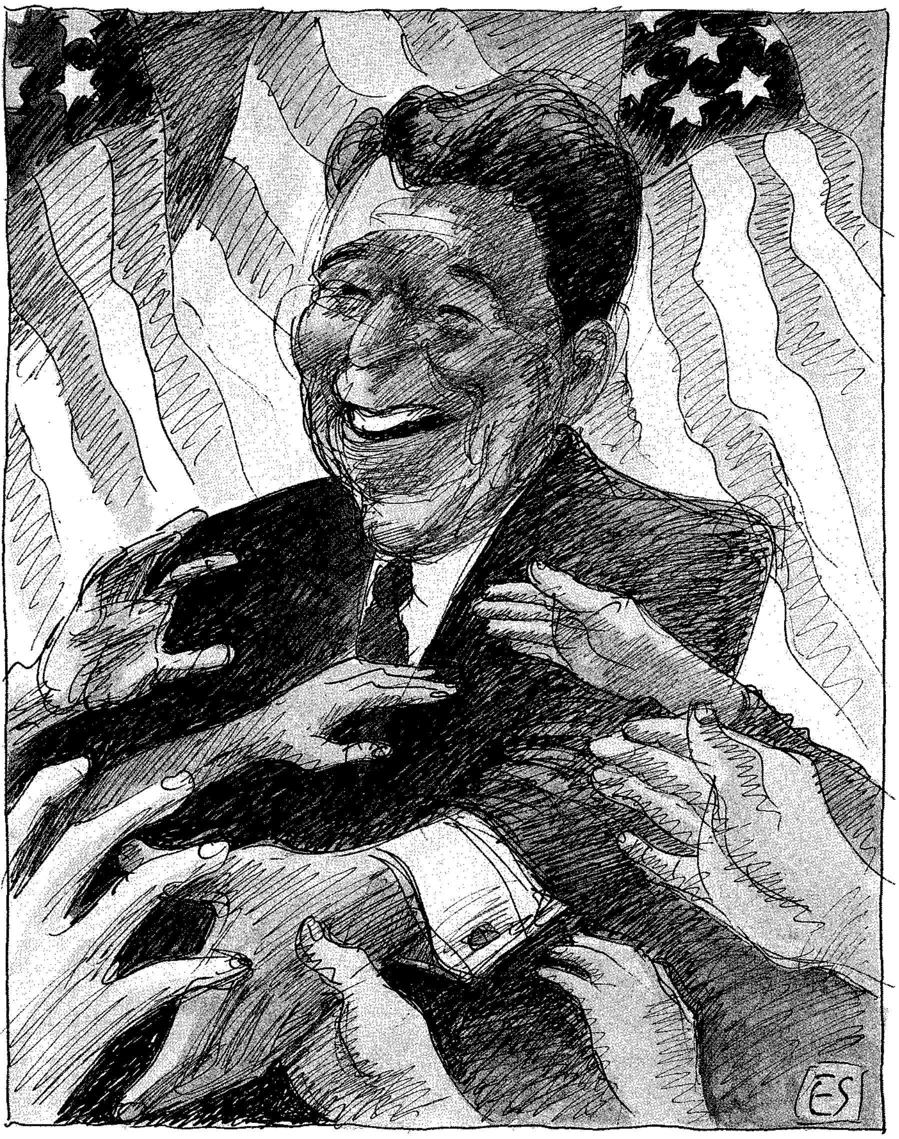
He never visited my study, however, and on reflection I am glad he did not, because he might have been disturbed to see how far he had come in nearly eighty years, and how few more cards he was likely to generate after leaving the White House. Besides, I would have had to keep my forearm over a file more than a foot long, practically bristling with tabs descriptive of "RR THE MAN." Now that the man is no more, and subject to the soft focus of sentimental recall, a riffle through some of these tabs might help restore his image in all its color and complexity.

The first subsection deals with Ronald Reagan's body. In 1988, at seventy-seven years of age, the President stood six feet one and weighed a hundred and ninety pounds, none of it flab. He boasted that any punch aimed at his abdomen would be jarringly repulsed. After a lifetime of working out with wheels and bars, he had broadened his chest to a formidably walled cavern forty-four inches in circumference. He was a natural athlete, with a peculiarly graceful Algonquin gait that brought him into rooms almost soundlessly. No matter how fast he moved (that big body could turn on a dime), he was always balanced.

One recalls how elegantly he choreographed Mikhail Gorbachev up the steps at the 1985 Geneva summit: an arabesque of dark blue flowing around awkward gray. Reagan loved to swim, ride, and foxtrot. (Doris Day remembers him as "the only man I ever knew who really liked to dance.") Eleven weeks after nearly dying in the assassination attempt of 1981, he climbed onto the springboard at the Camp David swimming pool and threw a perfect half pike before anybody could protest.

Gorbachev once remarked on Reagan's "balance" to me in an interview. But he used the Russian word *ravnovesie* in its wider sense, of psychological equilibrium. The President's poised body and smooth yet inexorable motion telegraphed a larger force that came of a lifetime of no self-doubt (except for two years of despair in 1948-49, after Jane Wyman, his first wife, left him for boring her). Reagan redux did not care whom he bored, as long as nobody tried to stop him. His famous anecdotes, recounted with a speed and economy that were the verbal equivalent of balance, were persuasive on the first, and even the fourth, telling. But when you heard them for the fourteenth, or the fortieth, time, always with exactly the same inflections and chuckles and glances, you realized that he *was* a bore in the sense that a combine harvester is boring: its only purpose is to bear down upon and thresh whatever grain lies in its path. Reagan used homilies to harvest people.

He was always meticulously dressed in tailored suits and handmade shoes and boots. But he was neither a dandy nor a spendthrift. In 1976, he still stepped out in a pair of high-cut, big-tongued alligator pumps that predated the Cold War: "Do you realize what I *paid* for these thirty years ago?" His personal taste never advanced beyond the first affectations of the nouveau riche. Hence the Corum twenty-dollar-face wristwatch, the Countess Mara ties, the Glen checks too large or too pale, and a weekend tartan blazer that was, in Bertie Wooster's phrase, "rather sudden, till you got used to it." Yet Reagan avoided vulgarity, because he sported such things without self-consciousness. And he wore the plainer suits that rotated through his wardrobe just as unpretentiously. No man ever looked better in navy blue, or black tie.



*All the rhetorical arts—gesture, timing, comedy, pathos—were at his command.*

EDWARD SOREL

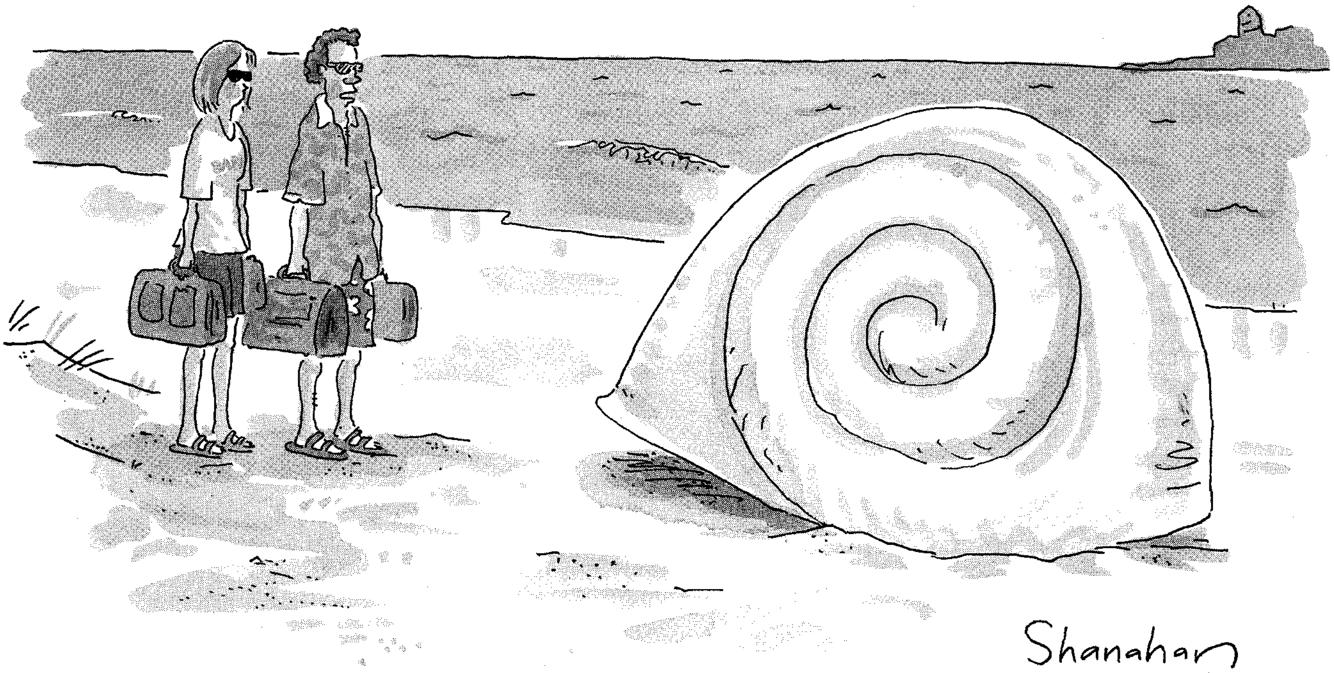
On a card inscribed "ALCOHOL"—his father's cross—appears the comment of an old Hollywood friend: "Ronnie never had a booze problem, but once every coupla years, he wasn't averse to a lot of drink. Its only effect was to make him more genial." His face would flush after a mere half glass of Pinot Noir, giving rise to repeated rumors that he used rouge.

Actually, Reagan never required makeup, even when he was a movie actor. He didn't sweat under hot lights: he basked in them. A young photographer who did a cover portrait of him in 1984 for *Fortune* told me, "When I walked into the Oval Office, I thought my career was made. He was just back from a long campaign swing, and looked *terrible*, all drained and lined. I hit him with every harsh spot I had, and etched out those wrinkles, figuring I'd do what Richard Avedon did to Dottie Parker. Know what? When my contacts came back from the darkroom, the old bastard looked like a million bucks. Taught me a real lesson. Ronald Reagan wasn't just born for the camera. There's something about him that *film* likes."

Several of my cards itemize the President's deafness. People who sat to his right imagined that they were privileged. In fact, he heard nothing on that side, having blown an eardrum during a shoot-out scene in one of his old movies. His left ear was not much better, so he relied increasingly on hearing aids, although their distortion pained him. One learned not to sneeze in his presence. When the room was crowded and voice levels rose, he would furtively switch off his sound box. I could tell from a slight frown in his gaze that he was lip-reading.

The quietness that insulated him was accentuated by severe myopia. As a boy, "Dutch" Reagan assumed that nature was a blur. Not until he put on his mother's spectacles, around the age of thirteen, did he perceive the world in all its sharp-edged intricacy. He did not find it disorienting, as somebody who had been blind from birth might. Perhaps his later, Rothko-like preference for large, luminous policy blocks (as opposed to, say, Bill Clinton's fly's-eye view of government as a multifacetted montage, endlessly adjustable) derived from his unfocussed childhood.

Or perhaps the novelist Ray Bradbury, who also grew up four-eyed in



*"It's small, but it's right on the beach."*

• •

small-town Illinois, has a more informed theory. "I often wonder whether or not you become myopic for a physical reason of not wanting to face the world," Bradbury says in an oral history. Like Dutch, he competed with a popular, extrovert elder brother by "making happy things for myself and creating new images of the world for myself." Reagan was not introverted, yet from infancy he had the same kind of "happy" self-centeredness that Bradbury speaks of, the same need to inhabit an imaginative construct in which outside reality was refracted, or re-ordered, to his liking. "I was completely surrounded by a wall of light," Reagan wrote of his first venture onto a movie set. It was clear that the sensation was agreeable.

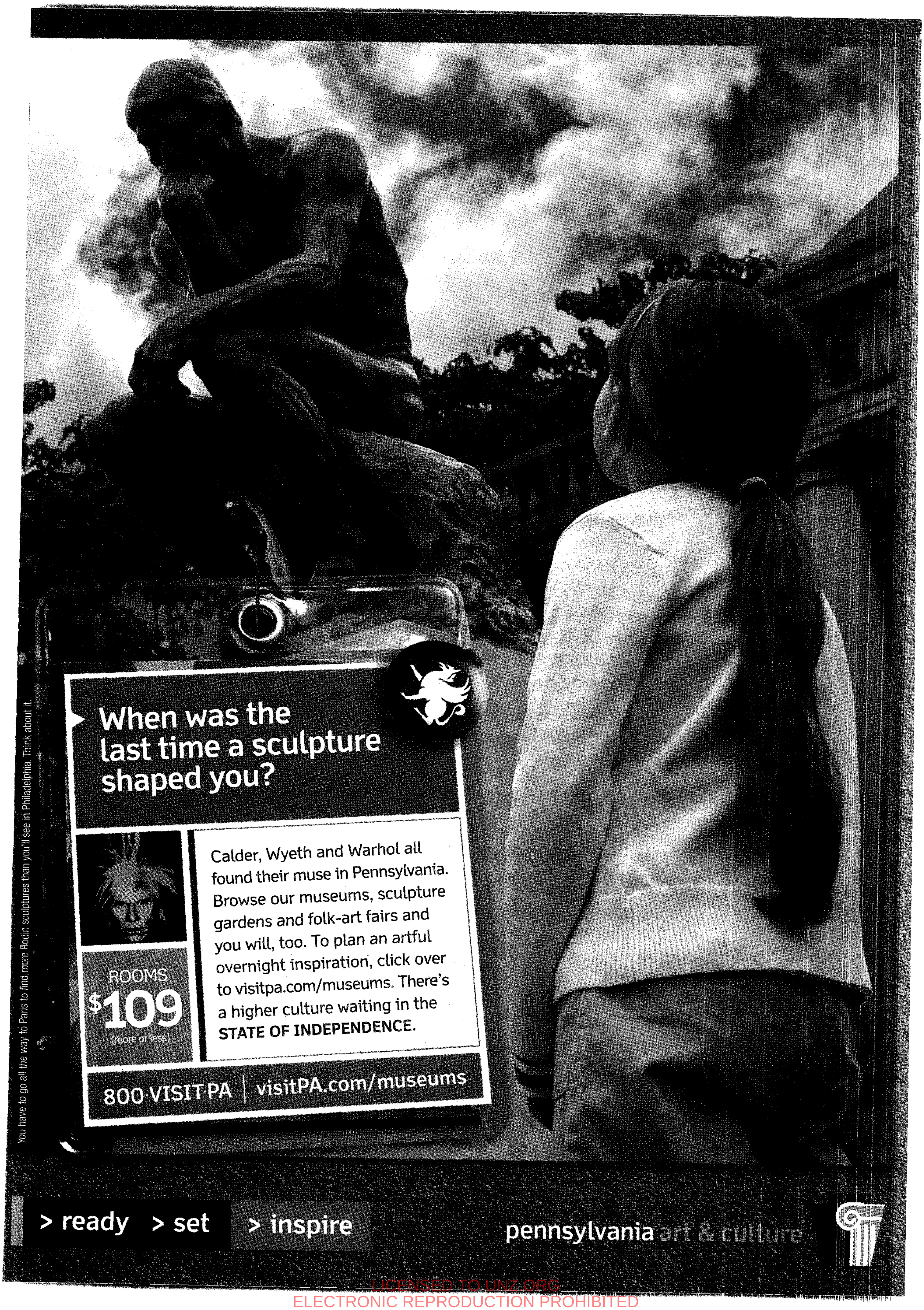
More so, one is tempted to say, than sex, where self-centeredness is definitely not appreciated by other parties. I never accumulated much documentation on Reagan's libido, since he was of that generation which kept such matters private. However, I did card a series of mostly repetitive observations by former girlfriends. The consensus is that although "Ronnie" was virile and attractive in a tanned-ranchman sort of way, his advances were unexciting. "Too nice, too easily pushed off," one old torch singer said, "and too damn philosophical about it afterward. He didn't have that, uh, slight *menace* that gives a girl a thrill." A group of women who knew him socially as President blamed his tepid sex appeal on a lack of "focus"—the word recurs—"as though we didn't interest him as individuals."

Reagan needed eight regular hours of sleep—"nine if I can get it." His longtime aide Michael Deaver was amazed to find him beneath a pile of bedclothes at nine o'clock on the morning of his first Inauguration. Although he sometimes had to recite Robert Service's "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" to conquer insomnia, his sleep was cataleptic. Nancy Reagan was not with him the night a hurricane hit the White House in 1985, so he slumbered right through, and was puzzled to find both doors of their bedroom suite blown open the next morning. Rumors of the President nodding off during meetings were unfounded: he never napped during the day. But this did not stop him joking that his Cabinet chair should be labelled "Reagan Slept Here."

He had an aversion to sleeping while travelling. On flights back from Tokyo or Moscow, he would sit working with battery-like energy while everybody else crashed. There is an autographed snapshot of him on Air Force One, bending in mock panic over a snoring Secretary of State George Shultz. "But George," Reagan's inscription reads, "I have to talk to you—the Russians are calling." When he made his address to Congress after the Geneva summit, he had been writing and talking for nineteen hours straight.

I have eight cards devoted to that beautiful voice, a melodious baritone husked with silky higher frequencies. It was what encouraged Max Arnow, the casting director of Warner Bros., to award Reagan a screen contract, in 1937. His film début, in "Love Is on the Air," called for him to spend plenty of time soliloquizing into microphones. Fan-mail enthusiasm was immediate and strong ("Dear Ronnie, I am in love with your voice, it is so soothing"; "Dear Mr. Reagan, you have the most wonderful voice in pictures"). In those days, the voice was lighter and faster: his labial dexterity was such that he had to train himself to speak more slowly, lest his mouth wreathe on camera, like Mister Ed's. In later years, his voice acquired more weight and an enchanting hesitancy that disguised the banality of his conversation.

Ronald Reagan is inaccurately remembered as a warm man, and I think



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the voice (which he lubricated with hot lemon water) had much to do with it. One would have to go back to Franklin D. Roosevelt to find a President as able to convey by auditory means alone such reassurance that better times were coming and the nation's security was guaranteed. Merely by breathing, "My fellow-Americans," he made his listener trust him.

All the other rhetorical arts—rhythm, gesture, timing, comedy, pathos—were at his instant command. Gerald Ford, just after accepting the G.O.P. Presidential nomination in 1976, made the mistake of inviting Reagan to say "a few words" to the delegates, and stood gray-faced as they came to the evident conclusion that they had chosen the wrong man. Jimmy Carter and George H. W. Bush could not emulate Reagan's kindly chuckle (always deployed when he was cornered) or his ability to tear up at the right moment. Yet, for all their emotional awkwardness, one cannot imagine either of them ignoring their first grandchild, as Reagan did for two years, or walking away from the brain-damaged James Brady with nothing more than a cheerful "Hi, Jim."

Children respond to sincerity rather than to smoothness, and, having watched all the above Presidents address young audiences, I can report that Reagan was distinctly the least successful. He talked just as he did to adults, which is to say, with an eye contact that took in the whole room rather than its individual parts, with a delivery precisely directed to the farthest television camera, and with benign indifference to whether any child understood him, as long as the applause was general.

The second subsection of my biographical file—about two hundred and forty cards—deals with Ronald Reagan's character, and begins with "ADVISABILITY." The President had a trusting credulity that was part of his charm: if a proposal was put to him with enough conviction, he not only registered it but recorded it in his memory, which was both photographic and phonographic. He was not, however, malleable; those who sought to advise him had to come from an approved ideological quarter. "I want to get expertise from people in various fields," he wrote in 1985, "but I haven't changed my views since I've been here."

The most famous example of Reagan's advisability was his acceptance of Edward Teller's concept of the Strategic Defense Initiative, in September of 1982. Dr. Teller represented all that the President admired in a scientist, being distinguished, individualistic, sonorously spoken (Max Arnow would have loved the Hungarian consonants), and short on academic circumspection. For half an hour, Teller deployed X-ray lasers all over the Oval Office, reducing hundreds of incoming Soviet missiles to radioactive chaff, while Reagan, gazing up ecstatically, saw a crystal shield covering the Last Best Hope of Man. He saw it so whole and perfect that Gorbachev, three years later, was powerless to convince him that the S.D.I. would militarize space. Nor could Gorbachev accept that Reagan was serious in wanting him to build a space shield, too, with American technology if necessary. Mutually assured destruction was a threat any Slav could understand. Mutually assured *protection* was a notion so pea-brained one could only slam down one's pencil and stare at the "dinosaur"—Gorbachev's word—who proposed it.

But Reagan stared back, during the longest silence that Secretary of State Shultz had ever experienced at a negotiating table. It was ten minutes past noon, Swiss time, on November 20, 1985: the key moment in forty years of Cold War brinkmanship. "I regret you cannot see it our way," Gorbachev said at last, confounded as much by the President's power of belief as by his lack of hostility.

A beaming bonhomie was one of the most attractive things about Ronald Reagan. No matter how troubled he might be by a throbbing prostate, or by intelligence that a Libyan hit squad was after him, he eschewed angst and aggression. I have only two records of his becoming physically violent: once in 1943, when a Hollywood drunk made an anti-Semitic remark to his face, and again in 1973, when Michael Deaver criticized his loyalty toward the disgraced Spiro Agnew. Even then, Reagan contented himself with throwing a heavy bunch of keys at Deaver's breastbone. He had moral reasons to despise Jack Warner and Armand Hammer and Ferdinand Marcos, but couldn't summon up the necessary malice. His glow, though, was oddly neutral. A man who professes to like everybody is by definition a man who cares for nobody in particular.

No fewer than twenty-nine of my cards document Reagan's detachment. He was at once the most remote and the most accessible of men. Although he revelled in the constant flesh-pressing of the Presidency, and ate up flattery with a spoon, he needed regular spells of "personal time." Glance through the Oval Office peephole and you would see him happily writing in longhand, always with his tie straight and jacket on, ensconced in an egglike solitude that the curvature of the lens only emphasized.

Adored by so many, he was a man with no real friends. This was not due to any inherent misanthropy. Young Dutch had been as gregarious as any normal football-playing boy at Eureka College. In Des Moines, where he worked as a sportscaster from 1933 to 1937, he ran with a crowd from Drake University, sang barbershop quartet with them, and encouraged his fellow-minstrels to follow him to Los Angeles when he signed his screen contract: "Don't worry about money, I'll support you till you find work." For a year or two, the quartet remained inseparable, but after Reagan married Jane Wyman, in January of 1940, his career burgeoned, and he moved into a different social sphere.

He grew increasingly political during the war, as an Air Corps adjutant in daily touch with Washington, and by 1947, when he assumed the presidency of the Screen Actors Guild, he had become so obsessed with trade unionism and anti-Communism as to lose interest in casual chat. When Wyman divorced him the following year, she cited politics as her co-respondent.

Until he remarried, in 1952, earnest, bespectacled Ronnie was said to be "best friends" with William Holden, and after that with Robert Taylor. But neither man was more than a barbecue buddy. Hundreds of political supporters and associates claimed to be close to him when he was governor of California and thousands during his Presidency. Former Senator Paul Laxalt spoke for all of them when he said, "I guess I know Ronald Reagan as well as any-

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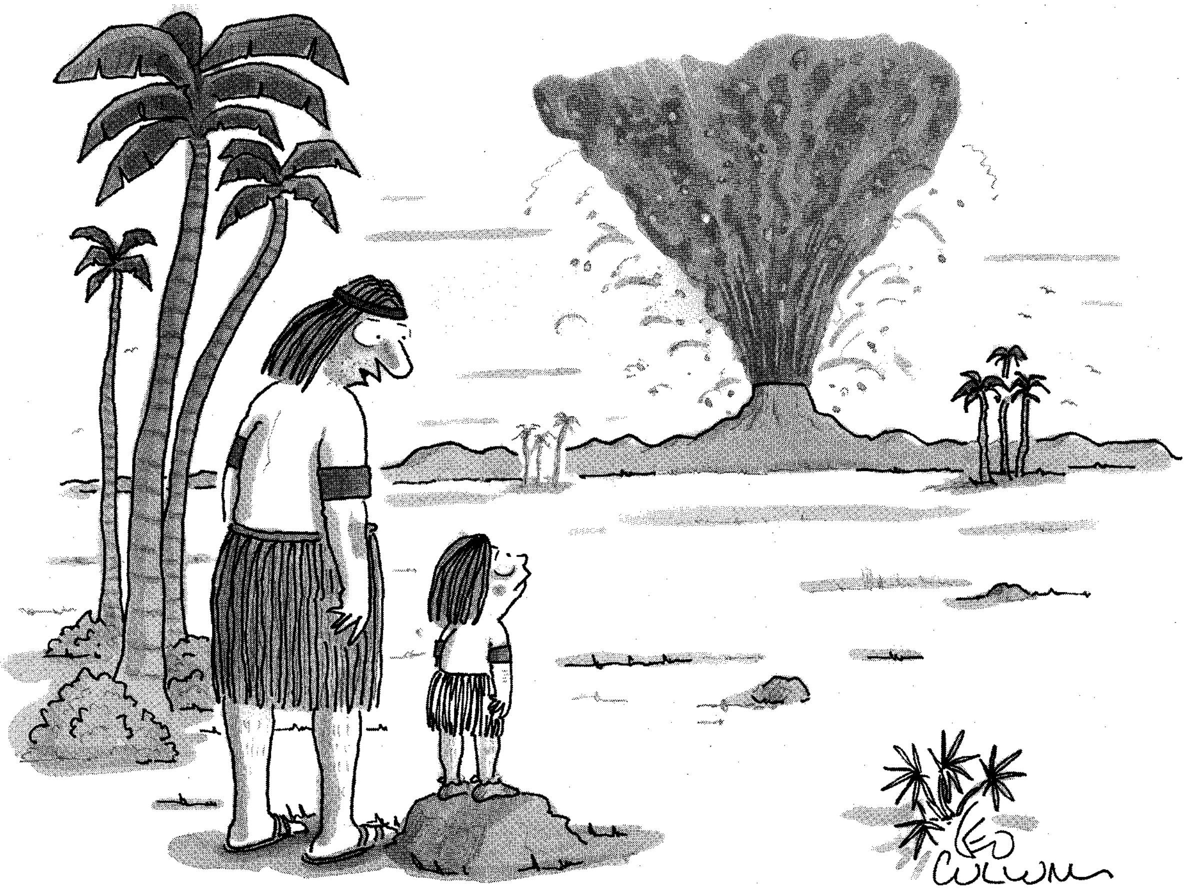

"The gods aren't angry—they're having blood pressure issues."

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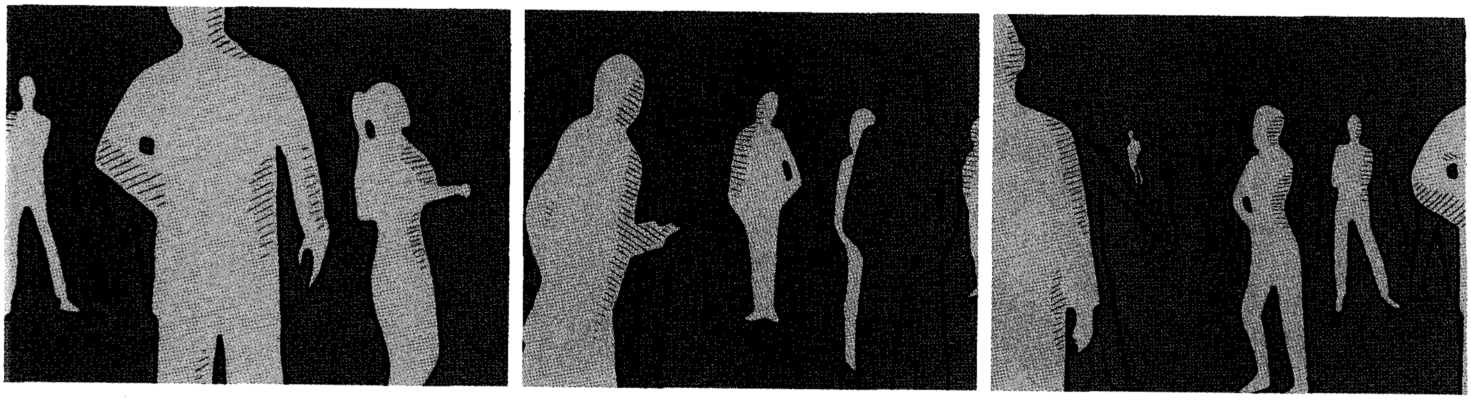

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body. Of course, we never talk about anything *personal*."

Sooner or later, every would-be intimate (including his four children, Maureen, Michael, Patti, and Ron) discovered that the only human being Reagan truly cared about (after his mother died) was Nancy. For Laxalt, disillusionment came when the President called to thank him for his campaign help in 1984, only to pause in midsentence and audibly turn over a page of typescript. For William F. Buckley, Jr., it was when Reagan showed polite relief at his inability to accept an offer of hospitality. For Michael Reagan, it was the high-school graduation day his father greeted him with "My name is Ronald Reagan. What's yours?"

Patti Davis, Reagan's younger daughter, writes in her 1992 autobiography:

> Often, I'd come into a room and he'd look up from his notecards as though he wasn't sure who I was. Ron would race up to him, small and brimming with a child's enthusiasm, and I'd see the same bewildered look in my father's eyes, like he had to remind himself who Ron was. . . . I sometimes felt like reminding him that Maureen was his daughter, too, not just someone with similar political philosophies.

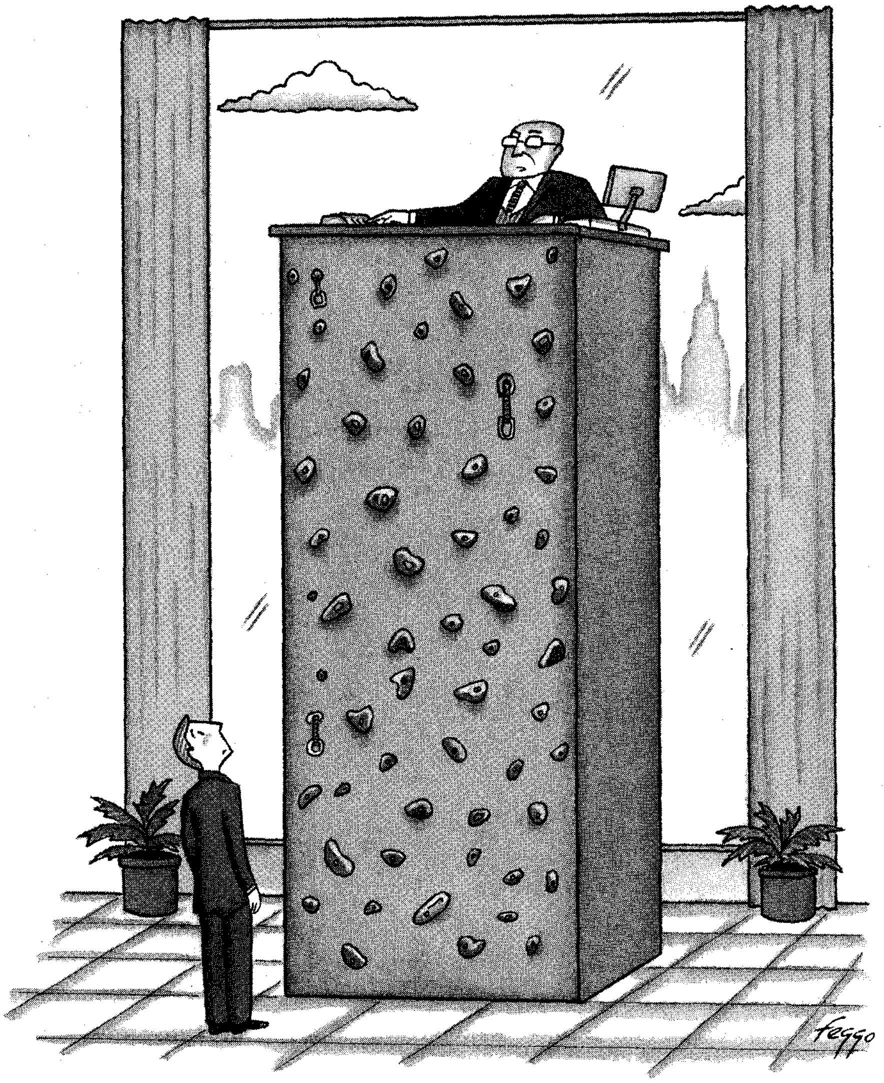
Reagan's scrupulously kept Presidential diary is remarkable for a near-total lack of interest in people as individuals. In all its half million or so words, I did not find any affectionate remark about his children. He conscientiously names every visitor to the Oval Office, having a printed schedule to refer to, but in conversation he tended to rely on pronouns. Nor did he pay much attention to faces. "Nice to meet you, Mr. Ambassador," he greeted Denis Healey, the former Defense Minister of Great Britain, while the real British Ambassador stood by. "But I've already met him," his Excellency complained, "*eleven* times."

This may be the place to note that, in all the years I observed Ronald Reagan until 1992—when he suddenly became weird—I never saw any sign of cognitive dementia. There were, to be sure, days late in his Presidency when he drifted off, as old men do. On May 29, 1988, for example, he emerged from an extended one-on-one with Gorbachev unable to recall a word that had been said. But such lapses were rare, and could usually be ascribed to fatigue. His prose style remained clear and sequential through 1994, when he bade farewell to the American people in a handwritten letter of unsurpassable poignancy.

Nancy Reagan conceded that there were "parts of Ronnie" that he kept to himself. I discovered, interviewing her, that she had little clue to how his mind worked—how he memorized scripts, pondered decisions, intuited political opportunities. He trusted her superior judgment of people but hardly ever asked her political advice; he did not even consult her about running for the Presidency. His locker-room side (which could be jovially obscene) was foreign to her, as was the Practical Christian and the imaginative dreamer who wanders through some unpublished short stories he wrote in college.

I hesitate to blaspheme against one of the most celebrated amours in White House history, but the way Reagan advertised his uxoriousness—the fulsome toasts and tributes, the hand-holding, the on-camera kisses—always struck me as excessive. There was something guilty about his superimposition of an enormous valentine card, all ribbons and bluebirds, over the stark black-and-white of his divorce decree from Jane Wyman. Possibly he was embarrassed by the many similarities between his two wives. Both had been wide-eyed, street-smart, scorchingly ambitious starlets, abandoned by their fathers in infancy, convinced of the world's treachery, drawn to Reagan as a haven of goodness and strength, then frustrated to the point of despair by his reluctance to propose.

The difference with Nancy was that *her* ambition concerned only him: she wanted nothing for herself except the satisfaction of making him powerful. She had taken him on, moreover, when his acting career was in rapid decline,



*"Ascend, Collins."*

and when his brilliant future as a politician could hardly have been predicted. Yet she never flinched in her steely belief that he would recover and prevail. Even when he was forced to do variety in Vegas for money, early in 1954, she was there every night at a front table, giving him the luminous "look" that bolstered his self-respect.

Within a few months, Ronald Reagan was professionally reborn, as the host of "General Electric Theatre." He became a star of the corporate lecture circuit, honing his oratory into "The Speech," a statement of the free-market conservative principles that would sustain him ideologically for the rest of his life. Nancy's stepfather, Dr. Loyal Davis, one of the most rock-ribbed reactionaries in the American Medical Association, has often been blamed for her husband's swing to the right. But the truth is that Reagan lost his New Deal liberalism immediately after the Second World War, when he was targeted by Communist-controlled crafts unions as a lackey of studio management. He was a conservative Democrat long before he remarried.

By the early nineteen-sixties, he was a confirmed Eisenhower Republican, rich, well connected, and a political force strong enough to be courted by Richard Nixon and Barry Goldwater. The more widely he travelled as campaigner and corporate spokesman, the more joyously he returned to his showplace house in Pacific Palisades, red-draped, mother-dominated, thrumming with appliances supplied free by his parent company. It was a kind of womb, to which he became almost pathologically attached. This ode to a shag rug was written by Reagan in 1961:

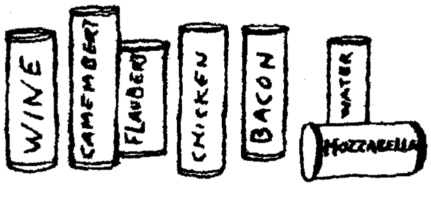
> Across from where I sit . . . I can see certain paths pressed into the pile of the carpet . . . paths leading to a chair (big footprints), to a piano (feminine nine-year-old-size prints), to a corner handy for hiding (very small prints) and of course narrow side paths (middle-size prints) . . . to her chair. To me, these middle-size prints act as guy wires and girders holding all the rest together. I am glad that the carpet sweeper can never erase them.

Much as he embraced domesticity, however, he relied on Nancy to relieve him of its petty nuisances, such as school and servant problems, and finding a home for his mentally ailing mother while he was out of town. She made her own and Jane Wyman's children understand that although Dad was available for certain carefully scheduled hours of face time, in the pool or on horseback, he was not to be burdened with emotional demands. He had more important things than mere fatherhood on his mind: the governorship of California, for a start.

In grateful compensation, Reagan refused to believe any unsettling news about his wife—her parsimony, her pill dependencies, her violent disciplining of Patti, her middle-aged infatuation with Frank Sinatra. "I want you to go away and think carefully about what you have just said," he reproved a gubernatorial aide, who worried that Nancy's verbal abuse of staffers might become a news story. "My Nancy doesn't behave like that."

There is no doubt that she loved him for better and for worse, as her care of him in his last years has shown. Neither was there any equivocation in his love for her, as far as it went. But my impression is that it stopped at the frontier of his own comfort. One can read right through "I Love You, Ronnie," the volume of love letters published by Nancy in 2000, without finding a single perceptive remark about *her.* The countless references to "Mommie" in the Presidential diaries are expressed almost entirely in terms of personal need. During her rare absences from the White House, his complaints of being "lonely" and "lonesome" echo with foghorn-like regularity. And this: "Why am I so scared always when she leaves? . . . I do an awful lot of praying until she returns." It never occurs to him that she might be lonely, too, or bereaved or frightened, that she has any identity other than—by extension—his own.

Well, if love is the satisfaction of mutual needs, they got what they wanted. I stood behind them in church on May 10, 1992, just before Alzheimer's began to separate him from her. They held the same hymnbook with their outer arms, while the inner ones circled in an embrace, and their voices blended as they sang "Blest Be the Tie That Binds."



Ronald Reagan's air of gentleness was such that few people noticed, or could believe they were noticing, that he had little private empathy with them. In November of 1988, a delegation of Bangladeshis visited the Oval Office to tell him about the catastrophic effects of the Burhi Ganga floods. After a few minutes, their spokesman stopped, disconcerted by the President's dreamy smile. "You know," Reagan said, "I used to work as a lifeguard at Lowell Park beach, on the Rock River in Illinois, and when it rained upstate you wouldn't believe the trees and trash, and so forth, that used to come down."

Yet he could be movingly sincere when he was required to emote in public. To question his identity with "the boys of Pointe du Hoc," or the nameless dead of Bergen-Belsen, would be to misunderstand his essentially thespian nature. Actors are not like you or me: their real world, where they really feel, is onstage.

Reagan in any case was more than just an actor. He was a statesman, unaccustomed to encountering any will stronger than his own, and his detachment was a necessary armor against the emotional demands that responsibility attaches to power. All leaders have to sheathe themselves, or they cannot function. André Malraux's first impression of Charles de Gaulle is equally applicable to Ronald Reagan:

> [One felt] a remoteness, all the more curious because it appeared not only between himself and his interlocutor but between what he said and what he was. . . . He established with the person he was talking to a very powerful contact, which seemed inexplicable when one had left him. A contact above all due to a feeling of having come up against a total personality.

Was Reagan familiar with de Gaulle's leadership maxim, "*Il faut cultiver le mystère*"? Probably not, but he didn't have to be: the mystery was already there. I have a whole sheaf of "ENIGMA" cards, wherein various interviewees speculate on how much the President knew, or didn't know, about what they were trying to tell him. If he was as disengaged as he often seemed, doodling absent-mindedly during long presentations, how did he, time and again, manage to pose exactly the

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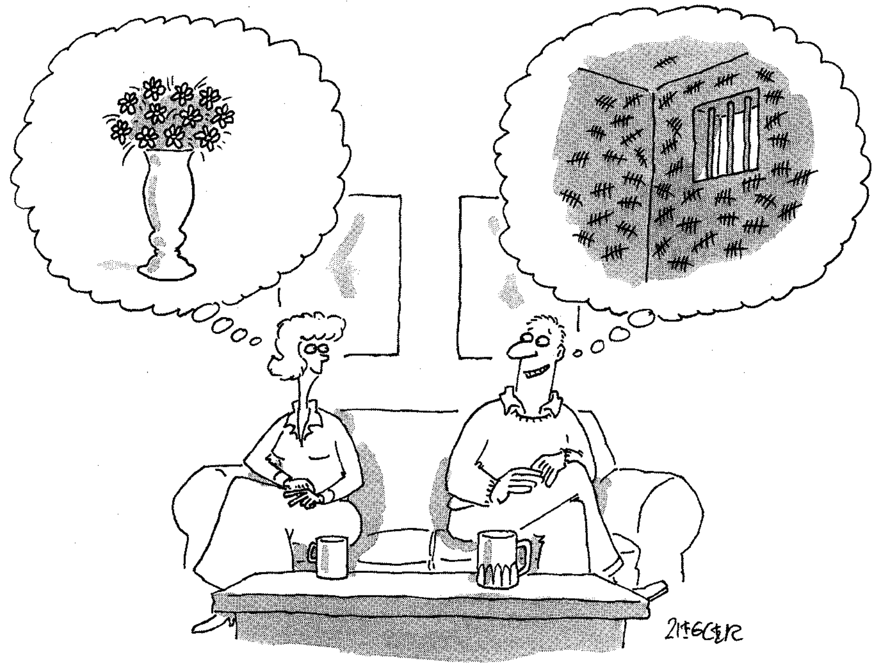

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kind of simple hypothesis that showed the presenter to be confused? Was he sending a subtle message, when the doodle curved into the hindquarters of a horse?

Which brings me to the cards I most enjoyed compiling—those that caught Reagan's humor. Most of his very funny stories (told with a verbal economy and cadence that would tax any prose stylist) were mentally prerecorded and played back at will. As a young actor in the Warner Bros. commissary, he used to sit at the "fast" Jewish table in order to study, and eventually compete with, the shtick of such motormouths as George Burns, Jack Benny, and the Epstein brothers. Although not naturally a wit, he was capable of dry riposte, as in the crack about Archbishop Desmond Tutu that George H. W. Bush repeated the other day at the Washington National Cathedral, convulsing the congregation.

Perhaps the best of Reagan's one-liners came after he attended his last ceremonial dinner, with the Knights of Malta in New York City on January 13, 1989. The evening's m.c., a prominent lay Catholic, was rendered so emotional by wine that he waved aside protocol and followed the President's speech with a rather slurry one of his own. It was to the effect that Ronald Reagan, a defender of the rights of the unborn, knew that all human beings begin life as "feces." The speaker cited Cardinal John O'Connor (sitting aghast nearby) as "a fece" who had gone on to greater things. *"You, too, Mr. President—you were once a fece!"*

En route back to Washington on Air Force One, Reagan twinklingly joined his aides in the main cabin. "Well," he said, "that's the first time I've flown to New York in formal attire to be told I was a piece of shit."

Reagan's most regrettable characteristic in later years was his incuriosity, compounded, as it was, by a refusal to be budged from any shibboleth that suited him. He had been quite the opposite as a young man, avid to learn what he could about world affairs. He passionately espoused the New Deal, and by 1938 he had swung so far toward the idealistic left that he tried to join the Hollywood Communist Party. He was quickly rejected, on the shrewd ground that he was not Party material (too garrulous, too patriotic). During the Second World War, he became addicted to the *Reader's Digest*—so much so that he seemed to memorize every issue as soon as it hit the stands. Reagan has been rightly mocked for the condensed, packaged quality this gave to his thought, but at least until he left the employ of General Electric, in 1962, he was able to talk interestingly about subjects other than politics. From then on, all his considerable intelligence focussed on conservative doctrine, and his general knowledge atrophied.

As a result, he relied more and more on memories of past reading, and began to commit the gaffes that would bedevil all his political campaigns. By the time he became President, his ignorance had attained a kind of comic poignancy. He thought "Camus" rhymed with "famous" and that trees caused acid rain. He had never heard of "Our Town," "The Magic Mountain," "Carmen," or "Blow-Up." The names Goethe, Guevara, Disraeli, Knopf, Schumann, Fellini, Hockney, Piaf, and Prospero rang no bell. When I mentioned the Suez Canal, he shook his head sorrowfully and told me that it had been a mistake to give it back to the Panamanians.

His mind, if not protean, could nevertheless be described as Procrustean, in the scientist Frederick Turner's definition:

> [Such an intelligence] reduces the information it gets from the outside world to its own categories, and accepts reality's answers only if they directly address its own set of questions. . . . It insists on certainty and unambiguity, and so is at war with the probabilistic and indeterminate nature of the most primitive and archaic components of the universe.

As anyone can see who consults Ronald Reagan's disciplined, dogged manuscripts, he needed to impose order on chaos. He did not like to be surprised, or hustled; he liked punctuality, symmetry, sureness. Every item on his schedule was crossed off upon completion, with a triumphant arrow pointing down to the next. When travelling, he packed his own clothes, synchronizing them with his itinerary, so that each change would suit the time, occasion, and climate stops on tour. He even tried to reorder nature at Rancho del Cielo, his mountain retreat above Santa Barbara, pruning every thicket of brush, every dead madrona branch, until the skyline was as sharp as a sketch by Grant Wood.

Two sets of cards tabbed "RR: PARADOX" and "RR: PASSIVITY" might be combined in my drawer, were they not already alphabetical neighbors. It is indeed paradoxical that this most passive of Presidents should have been so active in bringing about the collapse of Soviet Communism. Ronald Reagan was not an initiator; he never called a meeting or drafted a new policy or hired or fired, unless somebody suggested it. He raised no objection when his first chief of staff and his Treasury Secretary swapped jobs. Even his angriest phone call to a foreign leader (Israel's Menachem Begin, during Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982) had to be prompted by Michael Deaver. Happy and fulfilled inside his Oval O—"I've got the biggest theatre in the world, right here," he said, grinning at me—he paid no attention to noises off: the furious arguments of Alexander Haig and Caspar Weinberger, David Stockman's whines and Donald Regan's roars, the whisperings of Oliver North and John Poindexter. Even when truly disturbing sounds invaded his tranquillity—the blowing up of the Marine barracks in Lebanon, the outcry of Jews over the Bitburg affair, the explosion of the Challenger—he seemed oddly equable, although in each case he performed a moving ceremony of grief.

One sound, however, did shake his complacency. It was the pop-popping of John Hinckley, Jr.,'s .22-calibre pistol outside the Washington Hilton Hotel on March 30, 1981. Since Reagan nearly died in that attack, so early in his Presidency, we can credit the sincerity of his written vow: "Whatever happens now I owe my life to God and will try to serve him in every way I can."

Nothing afterward, not even the debacle of Iran-Contra, deflected him from what he was convinced was his double mission: at home, to restore the American entrepreneurial spirit after fifty years of federal paternalism; abroad, to display such a resolute contempt for Marxism-Leninism that it would follow Nazism onto "the ash-heap of history." Both conceits were perceived as laughably naïve in 1981, at least in those Chardonnay-fragrant areas of Manhattan and Marin County where political issues are always described as "complex." Three years later, the first dream came true in a landslide reëlection, amid such a blizzard of red-white-and-blue as had not been seen across America since V-J Day. And after five years more—sadly, a little too late for Reagan to see it as President—the "evil empire" began to self-destruct, just as he had said it would.

History already shows that Reagan's political instincts were astute and his sense of the future prophetic. The Berlin Wall, which he so memorably described as "ugly as the idea behind it," is reduced to a few chips in museums. Teen-agers stroll hand in hand where guard dogs used to run. Cybercafés beep and brew in downtown Moscow and Beijing. Free-enterprise capitalism is now the norm of most economies, and free speech floods the Internet.

We became so positive a society under Ronald Reagan that we forget how low our national morale had sunk before he raised his right hand on January 20, 1981, and, by plain force of character, reinvested the Presidency with authority and dignity. In recent years, we have seen the office belittled again, but that is the way with democracy and its cycles: big men are followed by small; power gives way to dereliction. The Republic survives, and for as long as it survives I think Reagan will be remembered, with Truman and Jackson, as one of the great populist Presidents, an instinctual leader who, in body and mind, represented the better temper of his times.

In one of my last interviews with him, I tried out my theory that he "thought with his hips," as follows:

Q: Mr. President, do you realize that you had Einstein all figured out at age eighteen?

A: Huh?

Q: There you were, a summer lifeguard on the Rock River, swaying every day in your high chair on the diving raft. Somebody starts to drown in midstream. You throw down your glasses—everything's a blur—you dive into the moving water—you swim, not to where the drowning person is, but where he'll be by the time you intersect his trajectory. You think that you're moving in a straight line. But actually you're describing a parabola, because the river's got you too. Your curve becomes his curve; you grab him, swing him around, and start heading back *in reverse*, not toward the diving platform but *upstream*, so that by the time you get to shallow water you'll be back where you started. During all this action, you're in a state of flux: no fixed point of reference, no sense of gravity. Everything's *relative*. . . .

A (*Uninterested, interrupting*): Yeah, that river sure ran strong. Out there beyond the swimming line.

My *Relativitätstheorie* had understandably not impressed him, but I felt I'd at least touched on a subject that penetrated his shy pride. Long after the onset of Alzheimer's disease, when he could not understand the simplest question or recognize photographs of himself as President, he would still show visitors a watercolor of Lowell Park beach on the wall of his office. "I was . . . uh, a lifeguard . . . there . . . uh . . . I saved *seventy-seven lives!*" Then words would fail him, and he would gaze at the picture with his glossy head cocked, looking out beyond the swimming line to where the river ran strong. ♦

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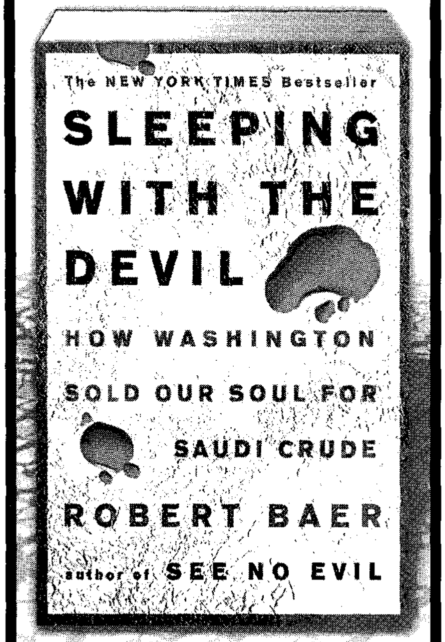
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SHOUTS & MURMURS

# OLYMPICS COUNTDOWN QUICKENS

BY BRUCE McCALL

Fellow Committee Members:

This report is late, but, then, what isn't? First, the new Olympic Stadium fell down last night. Investigators have pinpointed the cause as bad advice from Mediocrites, the God of Contracting, who specified shoddy building materials. Let's all be Stoics here, people!

We have just been advised that the official togas for our Greek Olympic team have still not been woven, with only five weeks (Roman calendar) remaining, but that the hundred flagons of wine set out for the Gods of Haberdashery should speed things up.

A papyrus roll just dropped off by messenger promises that another five thousand slaves will be on hand within days to complete the roof of the Greek-wrestling arena by the time events therein are scheduled to begin, or the supervisor vows to gargle with hemlock.

Zeus has not yet responded to the Finance Committee's urgent appeal for ideas about how to raise another billion drachmas for the unforeseen budget overruns. If no lightning bolts arrive at Olympic headquarters by the full moon, a Committee volunteer will be disembowelled and flung from a rock to remind Zeus. All members are advised not to stand out in the open while we await.

Shipments of pitch torches for after-dark events have been waylaid by pirate galleys off the Phoenician coast; we may have to substitute fat-dipped cornstalks. Plunderus, over at the Olympic Purchasing Office, recommends awarding a no-bid contract to his cousin Sleazus in Thrace to supply them, and to save time has already done so.

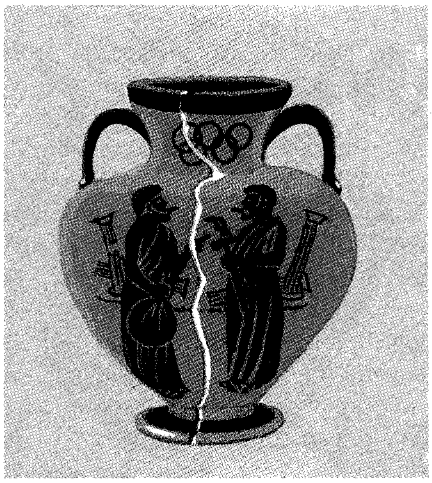
Good news: Spartan athletes have refused quarters in the Olympic Village and will sleep on the ground instead, creating badly needed space for the Trojan equestrian team.

This just in: The Vikings have added another condition to their participation in the Games—there must be an homage to Thor during the opening ceremonies. Who Thor? Anybody?

Update: The Visigoths still have not paid the entry fee. We are seeking a volunteer to try one last time to collect it.

More good news: Soothsayer assures us that chicken entrails guarantee the marathon route will be ready for the Games, provided that the Committee's twenty-thousand-drachma payment for a marathon right-of-way through his lower vineyard clears in time.

The color scheme for vases to be sold at all Olympic souvenir shops is now officially black on orange. (Vase jobbers should be alerted that focus groups strongly suggest guys wrestling one another will far outsell guys wrestling bulls.) A plea from Merchandising: Somebody please sculpt us a nice discus thrower!



BRUCE McCALL

All concerned are invited to the steps of the Parthenon tonight for Misdemeanoses' open trial re: his petty-cash thefts from the T. & E. office.

Cash wine bar after the suicide.

Just asking: How come no votes for Rome as the site for the next Games? Does everybody really want to journey all the way to Byzantium?

Where in Icarus' name *is* Byzantium? ♦

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ANNALS OF NATIONAL SECURITY

# PLAN B

*As June 30th approaches, Israel looks to the Kurds.*

BY SEYMOUR M. HERSH

In July, 2003, two months after President Bush declared victory in Iraq, the war, far from winding down, reached a critical point. Israel, which had been among the war's most enthusiastic supporters, began warning the Administration that the American-led occupation would face a heightened insurgency—a campaign of bombings and assassinations—later that summer. Israeli intelligence assets in Iraq were reporting that the insurgents had the support of Iranian intelligence operatives and other foreign fighters, who were crossing the unprotected border between Iran and Iraq at will. The Israelis urged the United States to seal the nine-hundred-mile-long border, at whatever cost.

The border stayed open, however. "The Administration wasn't ignoring the Israeli intelligence about Iran," Patrick Clawson, who is the deputy director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and has close ties to the White House, explained. "There's no question that we took no steps last summer to close the border, but our attitude was that it was more useful for Iraqis to have contacts with ordinary Iranians coming across the border, and thousands were coming across every day—for instance, to make pilgrimages." He added, "The questions we confronted were 'Is the trade-off worth it? Do we want to isolate the Iraqis?' Our answer was that as long as the Iranians were not picking up guns and shooting at us, it was worth the price."

Clawson said, "The Israelis disagreed quite vigorously with us last summer. Their concern was very straightforward—that the Iranians would create social and charity organizations in Iraq and use them to recruit people who would engage in armed attacks against Americans."

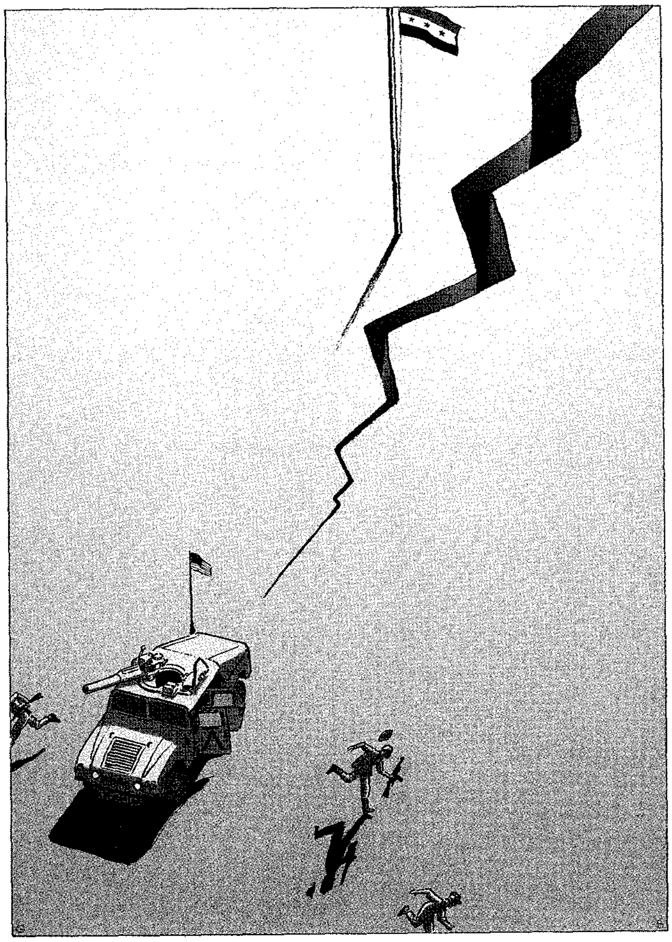
The warnings of increased violence proved accurate. By early August, the insurgency against the occupation had exploded, with bombings in Baghdad, at the Jordanian Embassy and the United Nations headquarters, that killed forty-two people. A former Israeli intelligence officer said that Israel's leadership had concluded by then that the United States was unwilling to confront Iran; in terms of salvaging the situation in Iraq, he said, "it doesn't add up. It's over. Not militarily—the United States cannot be defeated militarily in Iraq—but politically."

Flynt Leverett, a former C.I.A. analyst who until last year served on the National Security Council and is now a fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy, told me that late last summer "the Administration had a chance to turn it around after it was clear that 'Mission Accomplished' "—a reference to Bush's May speech—"was premature. The Bush people could have gone to their allies and got more boots on the ground. But the neocons were dug in—'We're doing this on our own.' "

Leverett went on, "The President was only belatedly coming to the understanding that he had to either make a strategic change or, if he was going to insist on unilateral control, get tougher and find the actual insurgency." The Administration then decided, Leverett said, to "deploy the Guantánamo model in Iraq"—to put aside its rules of interrogation. That decision failed to stop the insurgency and eventually led to the scandal at the Abu Ghraib prison.

In early November, the President received a grim assessment from the C.I.A.'s station chief in Baghdad, who filed a special field appraisal, known internally as an Aardwolf, warning that the security situation in Iraq was nearing collapse. The document, as described by Knight-Ridder, said that "none of the postwar Iraqi political institutions and leaders have shown an ability to govern the country" or to hold elections and draft a constitution.

A few days later, the Administration, rattled by the violence and the new intelligence, finally attempted to change its go-it-alone policy, and set June 30th as the date for the handover of sovereignty to an interim government, which would allow it to bring the United Nations into the process. "November was one year before the Presidential election," a U.N. consultant who worked on Iraqi issues told me. "They panicked and decided to share the blame with the U.N. and the Iraqis."



*If Iraq is divided, "you will be blamed," a Turkish official said.*

GUY BILLOUT

A former Administration official who had supported the war completed a discouraging tour of Iraq late last fall. He visited Tel Aviv afterward and found that the Israelis he met with were equally discouraged. As they saw it, their warnings and advice had been ignored, and the American war against the insurgency was continuing to founder. "I spent hours talking to the senior members of the Israeli political and intelligence community," the former official recalled. "Their concern was 'You're not going to get it right in Iraq, and shouldn't we be planning for the worst-case scenario and how to deal with it?' "

Ehud Barak, the former Israeli Prime Minister, who supported the Bush Administration's invasion of Iraq, took it upon himself at this point to privately warn Vice-President Dick Cheney that America had lost in Iraq; according to an American close to Barak, he said that Israel "had learned that there's no way to win an occupation." The only issue, Barak told Cheney, "was choosing the size of your humiliation." Cheney did not respond to Barak's assessment. (Cheney's office declined to comment.)

In a series of interviews in Europe, the Middle East, and the United States, officials told me that by the end of last year Israel had concluded that the Bush Administration would not be able to bring stability or democracy to Iraq, and that Israel needed other options. Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's government decided, I was told, to minimize the damage that the war was causing to Israel's strategic position by expanding its long-standing relationship with Iraq's Kurds and establishing a significant presence on the ground in the semi-autonomous region of Kurdistan. Several officials depicted Sharon's decision, which involves a heavy financial commitment, as a potentially reckless move that could create even more chaos and violence as the insurgency in Iraq continues to grow.

Israeli intelligence and military operatives are now quietly at work in Kurdistan, providing training for Kurdish commando units and, most important in Israel's view, running covert operations inside Kurdish areas of Iran and Syria. Israel feels particularly threatened by Iran, whose position in the region has been strengthened by the war. The Israeli operatives include members of the Mossad, Israel's clandestine foreign-intelligence service, who work undercover in Kurdistan as businessmen and, in some cases, do not carry Israeli passports.

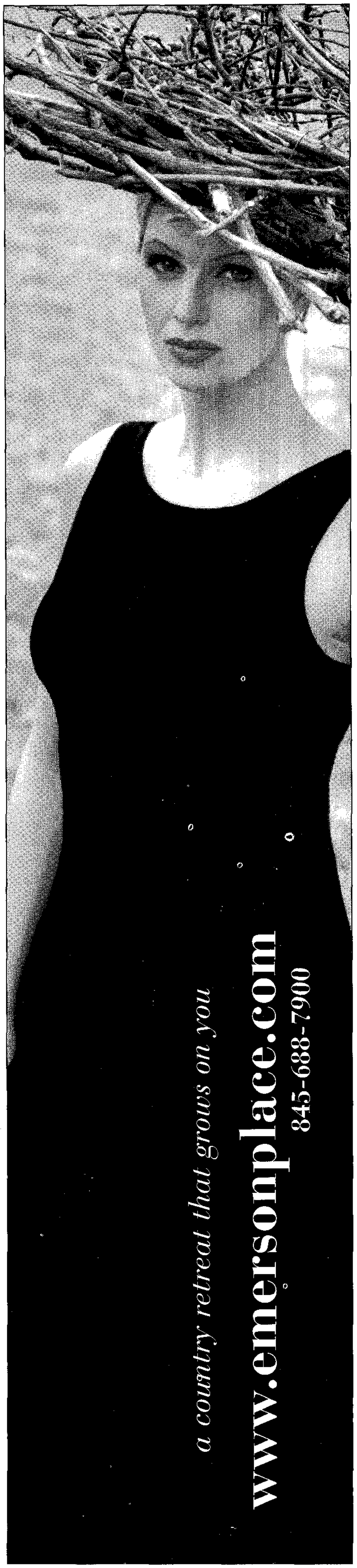
Asked to comment, Mark Regev, the spokesman for the Israeli Embassy in Washington, said, "The story is simply untrue and the relevant governments know it's untrue." Kurdish officials declined to comment, as did a spokesman for the State Department.

However, a senior C.I.A. official acknowledged in an interview last week that the Israelis were indeed operating in Kurdistan. He told me that the Israelis felt that they had little choice: "They think they have to be there." Asked whether the Israelis had sought approval from Washington, the official laughed and said, "Do you know anybody who can tell the Israelis what to do? They're always going to do what is in their best interest." The C.I.A. official added that the Israeli presence was widely known in the American intelligence community.

The Israeli decision to seek a bigger foothold in Kurdistan—characterized by the former Israeli intelligence officer as "Plan B"—has also raised tensions between Israel and Turkey. It has provoked bitter statements from Turkish politicians and, in a major regional shift, a new alliance among Iran, Syria, and Turkey, all of which have significant Kurdish minorities. In early June, *Intel Brief*, a privately circulated intelligence newsletter produced by Vincent Cannistraro, a retired C.I.A. counterterrorism chief, and Philip Giraldi, who served as the C.I.A.'s deputy chief of base in Istanbul in the late nineteen-eighties, said:

> Turkish sources confidentially report that the Turks are increasingly concerned by the expanding Israeli presence in Kurdistan and alleged encouragement of Kurdish ambitions to create an independent state. . . . The Turks note that the large Israeli intelligence operations in Northern Iraq incorporate anti-Syrian and anti-Iranian activity, including support to Iranian and Syrian Kurds who are in opposition to their respective governments.

In the years since the first Gulf War, Iraq's Kurds, aided by an internationally enforced no-fly zone and by a U.N. mandate providing them with a share of the country's oil revenues, have managed to achieve a large measure of independence in three northern Iraqi provinces. As far



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expert who is studying Iraq told me. "And, even if the Kurds do take Kirkuk, they can't transport the oil out of the country, since all of the pipelines run through the Sunni-Arab heartland."

A top German national-security official said in an interview that "an independent Kurdistan with sufficient oil would have enormous consequences for Syria, Iran, and Turkey" and would lead to continuing instability in the Middle East—no matter what the outcome in Iraq is. There is also a widespread belief, another senior German official said, that some elements inside the Bush Administration—he referred specifically to the faction headed by Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz—would tolerate an independent Kurdistan. This, the German argued, would be a mistake. "It would be a new Israel—a pariah state in the middle of hostile nations."

A declaration of independence would trigger a Turkish response—and possibly a war—and also derail what has been an important alliance for Israel. Turkey and Israel have become strong diplomatic and economic partners in the past decade. Thousands of Israelis travel to Turkey every year as tourists. Turkish opposition to the Iraq war has strained the relationship; still, Turkey remains oriented toward the West and, despite the victory of an Islamic party in national elections in 2002, relatively secular. It is now vying for acceptance in the European Union. In contrast, Turkey and Syria have been at odds for years, at times coming close to open confrontation, and Turkey and Iran have long been regional rivals. One area of tension between them is the conflict between Turkey's pro-Western stand and Iran's rigid theocracy. But their mutual wariness of the Kurds has transcended these divisions.

A European foreign minister, in a conversation last month, said that the "blowing up" of Israel's alliance with Turkey would be a major setback for the region. He went on, "To avoid chaos, you need the neighbors to work as one common entity."

*"This one goes verse, verse, chorus, train; verse, verse, chorus, train."*

• •

as most Kurds are concerned, however, historic "Kurdistan" extends well beyond Iraq's borders, encompassing parts of Iran, Syria, and Turkey. All three countries fear that Kurdistan, despite public pledges to the contrary, will declare its independence from the interim Iraqi government if conditions don't improve after June 30th.

Israeli involvement in Kurdistan is not new. Throughout the nineteen-sixties and seventies, Israel actively supported a Kurdish rebellion against Iraq, as part of its strategic policy of seeking alliances with non-Arabs in the Middle East. In 1975, the Kurds were betrayed by the United States, when Washington went along with a decision by the Shah of Iran to stop supporting Kurdish aspirations for autonomy in Iraq.

Betrayal and violence became the norm in the next two decades. Inside Iraq, the Kurds were brutally repressed by Saddam Hussein, who used airpower and chemical weapons against them. In 1984, the Kurdistan Workers Party, or P.K.K., initiated a campaign of separatist violence in Turkey that lasted fifteen years; more than thirty thousand people, most of them Kurds, were killed. The Turkish government ruthlessly crushed the separatists, and eventually captured the P.K.K.'s leader, Abdullah Ocalan. Last month, the P.K.K., now known as the Kongra-Gel, announced that it was ending a five-year unilateral ceasefire and would begin targeting Turkish citizens once again.

The Iraqi Kurdish leadership was furious when, early this month, the United States acceded to a U.N. resolution on the restoration of Iraqi sovereignty that did not affirm the interim constitution that granted the minority Kurds veto power in any permanent constitution. Kurdish leaders immediately warned President Bush in a letter that they would not participate in a new Shiite-controlled government unless they were assured that their rights under the interim constitution were preserved. "The people of Kurdistan will no longer accept second-class citizenship in Iraq," the letter said.

There are fears that the Kurds will move to seize the city of Kirkuk, together with the substantial oil reserves in the surrounding region. Kirkuk is dominated by Arab Iraqis, many of whom were relocated there, beginning in the nineteen-seventies, as part of Saddam Hussein's campaign to "Arabize" the region, but the Kurds consider Kirkuk and its oil part of their historic homeland. "If Kirkuk is threatened by the Kurds, the Sunni insurgents will move in there, along with the Turkomen, and there will be a bloodbath," an American military

The Israelis, however, view the neighborhood, with the exception of Kurdistan, as hostile. Israel is convinced that Iran is on the verge of developing nuclear weapons, and that, with Syria's help, it is

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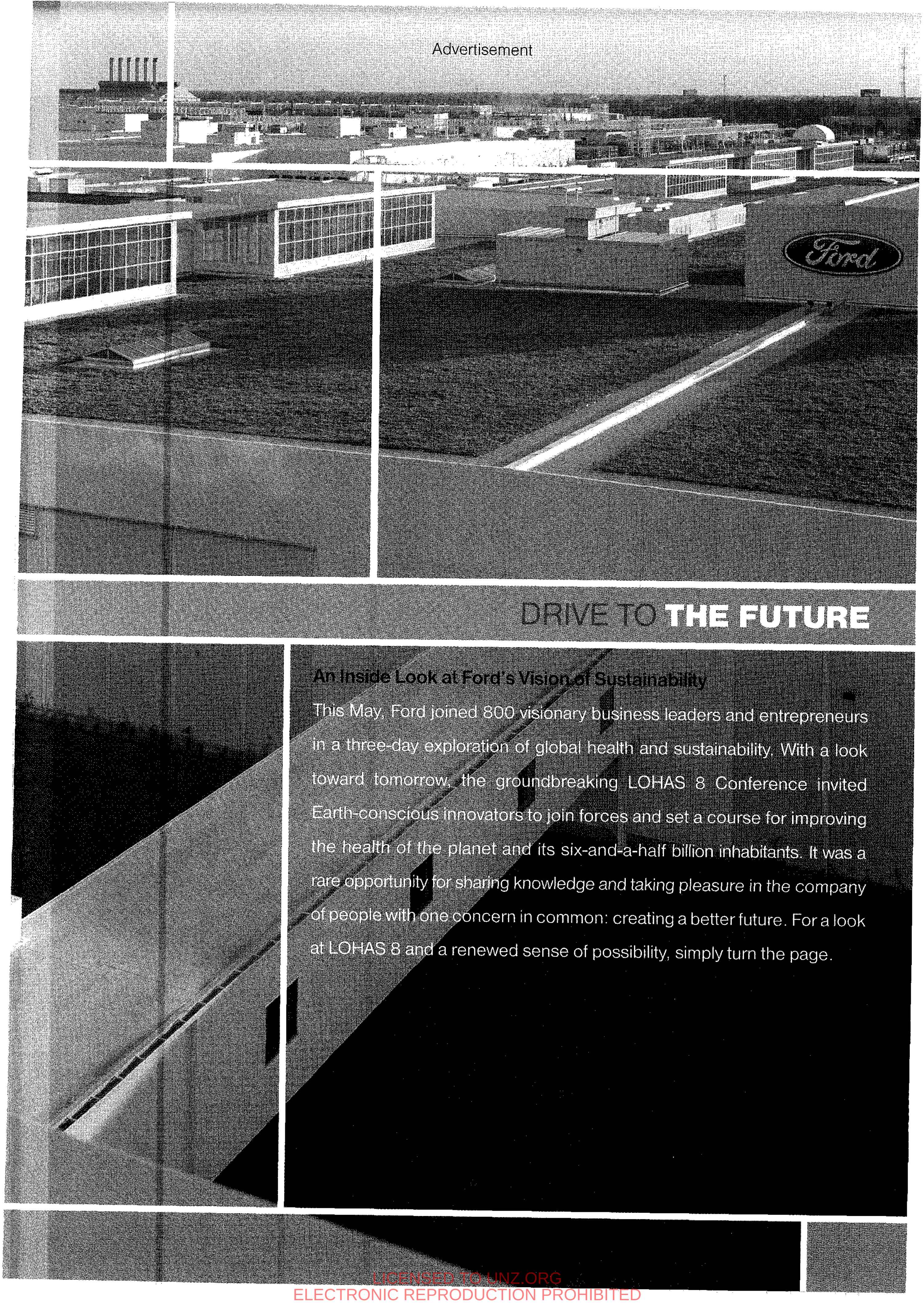


# DRIVE TO **THE FUTURE**

## An Inside Look at Ford's Vision of Sustainability

This May, Ford joined 800 visionary business leaders and entrepreneurs in a three-day exploration of global health and sustainability. With a look toward tomorrow, the groundbreaking LOHAS 8 Conference invited Earth-conscious innovators to join forces and set a course for improving the health of the planet and its six-and-a-half billion inhabitants. It was a rare opportunity for sharing knowledge and taking pleasure in the company of people with one concern in common: creating a better future. For a look at LOHAS 8 and a renewed sense of possibility, simply turn the page.

*Scenes from LOHAS 8 in Marina del Rey, California.*

By Ted Mitchell

Mary Ann Wright—a director at Ford Motor Company—approached the microphone and made a startling admission: she's been a vegan for twenty-three years. Not only that, her design team at Ford boasts 11 committed vegetarians. The revelation is not what one would expect from the inner circle of the American automaker, yet it was well received considering the audience. Mary Ann was one of the speakers at LOHAS 8, the eighth annual Lifestyles of Health and Sustainability conference which took place at the Ritz Carlton Marina del Rey in May of this year.

Mary Ann's full title is Director of Sustainable Mobility Technologies and Hybrid Vehicles. She was at LOHAS 8 to discuss Ford's deeply held convictions about environmentally sensitive design. It's a commitment that long precedes today's concern about oil prices and one that found a welcoming audience here.

The sunny skies of Southern California made the perfect backdrop for a conference whose subtitle was "The Business of Conscious Commerce." The 800 or so people who attended were, after all, optimists of the hardiest sort. They believe they can change the world and make money at the same time.

It's the kind of conference where some people arrived late to the first panel because they had just attended the organized yoga program at 7 a.m. Representatives from well-known companies like Honest Tea, Whole Foods, Spectrum Organics and Patagonia, all made speeches and rallied the crowd.

KEVIN PARRY/WIREIMAGE.COM

LOHAS 8 attendees like Josh Dorfman saw the event as a sign of good things to come. Dorfman's company, Vivavi, sells environmentally conscious but stylish products like shoes with soles of sustainable tree tap rubber, sourced from former Colombian cocaine fields—a pair of which he was wearing himself, along with a belt made from used tires. As he chatted with a friend, he was singing the praises of the country's 4th biggest company: Ford.

"They're really pushing the envelope," he said, after hearing a speech about Ford's commitment to a host of environmentally responsible projects. Chief among them is the launch of the new Escape Hybrid, a "partial zero emission" vehicle that is the world's first full hybrid SUV, one that automatically shifts from electric to gas engine power and gets unusually high gas mileage (see *Test Drive*). Then there's also Ford's completely "green" overhaul of the famous Rouge Center truck plant in Dearborn, Michigan, now the greenest factory in the world.

Tim O'Brien, Ford's vice president of corporate relations, gave the keynote address for LOHAS 8 and lots of people were undoubtedly surprised at what they heard. "Some people here may be skeptical," O'Brien said before he took the stage. "Ford has not been traditionally associated with this stuff—it's not Ben & Jerry's."

It can be a tough crowd. LOHAS gathers a bunch of smart contrarians willing to argue for their ecological beliefs. (Woe to the panelist who wasn't ready to support his statements.) Everyone came prepared with a carefully researched story to tell; give them half a chance and they were off and running, detailing the history of their company or riffing on the wasteful ways of most of the world.

Despite their reputation as tree-huggers, LOHAS attendees were more likely to embrace sophisticated solutions. One of the main themes of the conference was that advances in science are going to help preserve the earth—hence a popular panel called "Technology and the Environment: A Win-Win for Business and Consumers."

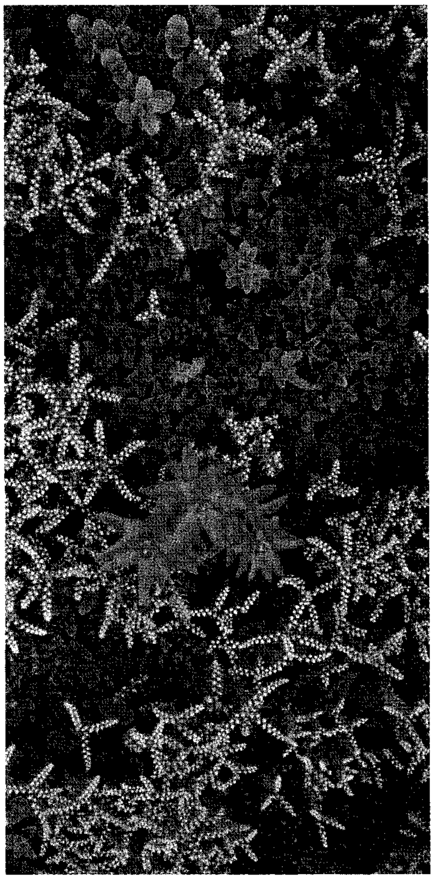
In this context, it made sense that Ford was the major sponsor of this year's conference, considering the launch of the Escape Hybrid. But it was a long road for the company to get to this point. "A year ago, frankly, Ford wouldn't have been in a position to be here," said the event's organizer, Frank Lampe of Conscious Media.

Referring to the first meeting the company conducted to discuss the cleanup of the Rouge plant, O'Brien told the crowd in his speech, "I can assure you that no one at that meeting knew what sustainability meant." (For the record, a simple definition of sustainability is "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." While simple enough to define, the practice demands a highly evolved approach to using and reusing resources.)

One person, however, who did know what sustainability meant was company chairman, Bill Ford, Jr. He's the driving force behind all the changes the company has been undergoing. The River Rouge project had a special place in his heart since it was built by his great-grandfather, company founder and industry icon, Henry Ford. At its peak, it employed more people than the U.S. Army and revolutionized auto production.

Bill Ford, Jr. wanted to create a place where the needs of production, people and the environment no longer conflict, but converge. The Rouge Center now boasts the world's largest living roof, 10.4 acres planted with a ground cover called sedum. It consumes carbon dioxide, thereby helping rid the atmosphere of a greenhouse gas.

**Advances in science can help preserve the earth.**


FORD MOTOR COMPANY

*Ten varieties of sedum are used in the world's largest ecologically inspired living roof—covering 10.4 acres atop Ford's Rouge Center truck plant. This innovative use of living materials absorbs carbon dioxide, releases oxygen and reduces greenhouse gases, all while insulating the building itself. Other green programs at the site include the planting of more than 1,500 trees and thousands of other plantings to attract songbirds and create habitats.*

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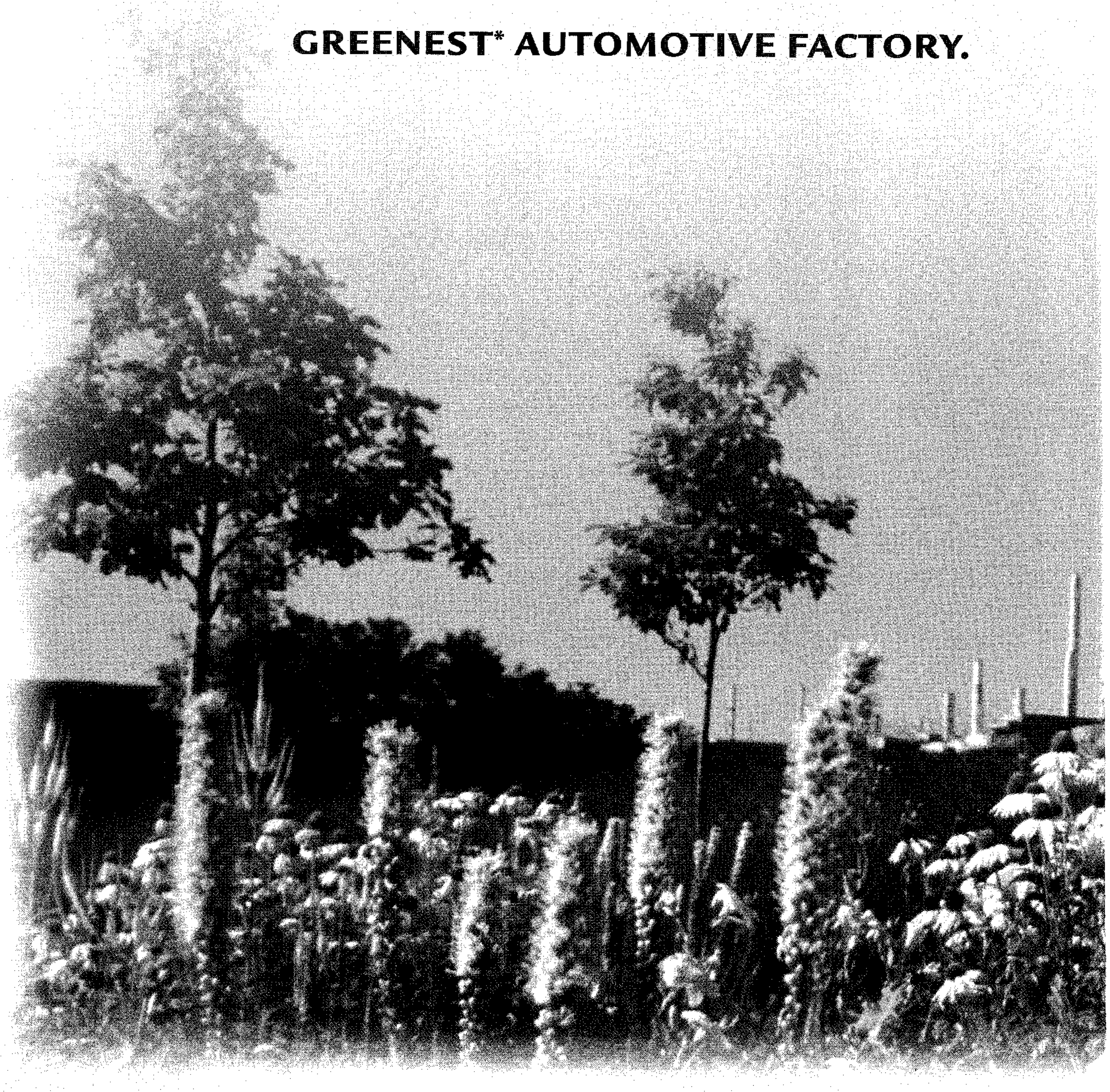

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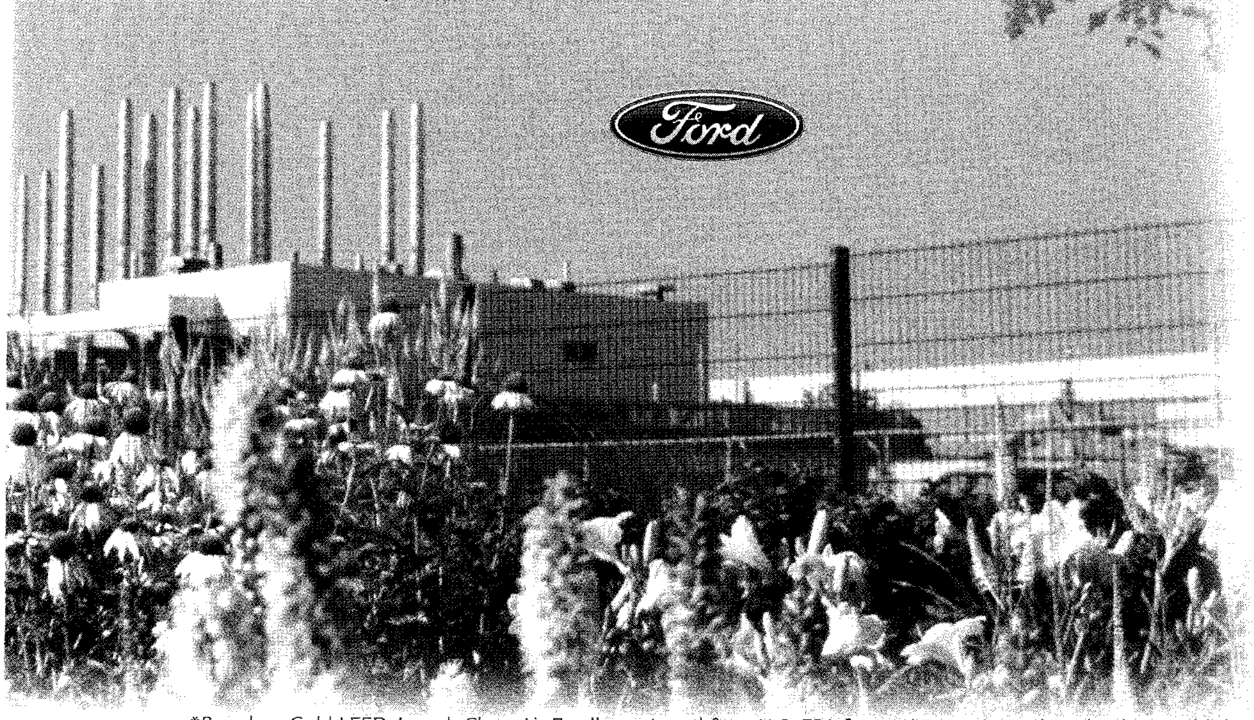

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**TEST DRIVE**

# THE ZERO COMPROMISE SUV

Sandra Bartley looked very comfortable behind the wheel. Bartley, a former race car driver who's now an automobile writer and consultant, recently tested a vehicle in busy Los Angeles traffic, accelerating hard to check out the handling, stopping quickly to test the brakes, not to mention zigging and zagging when necessary.

But it wasn't a sports car she was driving—it was the new Ford Escape Hybrid, the world's first full hybrid SUV, which goes on sale this fall. And Bartley wasn't the only one who got to try one. At the 8th annual LOHAS conference in Marina del Rey, Ford staged a "ride & drive" for members of the media and any other attendees who wanted to give it a go.

Naturally, people were curious. The Escape Hybrid qualifies as a "partial zero emission" vehicle, and on average is 99.4 percent cleaner than an unregulated vehicle. Ford anticipates that it will get over 35 mpg in city driving.*

That's a lot to boast, but the results on the streets of L.A. were impressive. One of the most striking features was the seamless transition between electric power and the gas engine ("full hybrid" means that the Escape Hybrid can run on either type of power alone). Drivers who expected to hear or feel the changeover were surprised to learn that they had crossed between modes. As Bartley put it, "You can't feel the difference."

The concept of driving in all-electric mode produced the most excitement. You never have to plug the Escape Hybrid in—each touch of the brakes recharges the battery. Also, the ride is incredibly quiet. In fact, Ford engineered it so that when you turn on the ignition, the gas engine automatically starts up for a few seconds, just so you know it's on.

All the test-drivers got very familiar with their tachometers. Ford added a green zone (an appropriate color) to the far left side. When the needle rests there, the vehicle is using only electric power. Generally, the Escape Hybrid changes over to gas at speeds over 25 mph or with brisk acceleration. So it became a game for drivers to try and stay in the green zone as long as possible, even at faster speeds.

Assuming that you are buying the vehicle to save gas, money and the environment, the charms of staying in the green zone actually induce even more energy-saving behavior on top of that. "It makes you want to drive slower," said Mark Higbie.

Collette Brooks, who currently drives the hybrid Toyota Prius, was bound to be a tough customer for the Escape Hybrid; someone who could compare and contrast it with her current car. But even Brooks, a local marketer and consultant, was won over on her drive.

"It's nimble," she said of the smooth handling. She echoed other drivers who said that the Escape Hybrid felt more like a car than a truck, despite its 4-wheel-drive power. In building a supremely energy-efficient SUV, the fun factor is not sacrificed. "That's the thing people have to realize—there's zero compromise here," said Brooks.

Brooks' friend, Lill Erickson, didn't even drive the Escape Hybrid; she merely rode along in the backseat. But she was so taken with it that she gave perhaps the highest compliment of the day: "This may be the first American car that I buy."

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* Based on Ford preliminary data, E.P.A. estimates not available at time of printing. Front-wheel-drive model. 35 city/27 hwy mpg. Actual mileage may vary based on driving habits.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

*continued from previous page*

These days, killdeer nest on the roof.

The sedum also acts as natural insulation for the building—it has to be cooled less in summer and heated less in winter, saving energy costs. It will also greatly extend the life of the roof itself. As O'Brien put it, "It was important to Bill Ford that this not be viewed as environmental philanthropy, but as sound business."

This was music to the ears of the LOHAS crowd. One of the main goals of the conference was to get the word out that a healthy environment and healthy commerce go hand in hand—the classic formulation of "doing well while doing good."

Seth Goldman, founder of organic tea maker Honest Tea, invoked a Chinese proverb in a speech about his company's "Great Tea Escape" partnership with Ford: "If we don't change the direction we are headed, we will end up where we are going." Goldman went on to explain that both organic foods and hybrid vehicles represent a rare chance to take society in a more sustainable direction by offering healthier choices for customers and for the environment.

He continued, "Ford is moving toward sustainability not because of mandates or lawsuits. Instead, Ford is taking action because of something even more powerful—consumers demand it."

Frank Lampe agreed. "It's a myth that this is not mainstream," he said. "Look around. You've got hybrid vehicles, recycled paper everywhere, and environmental issues taught in schools."

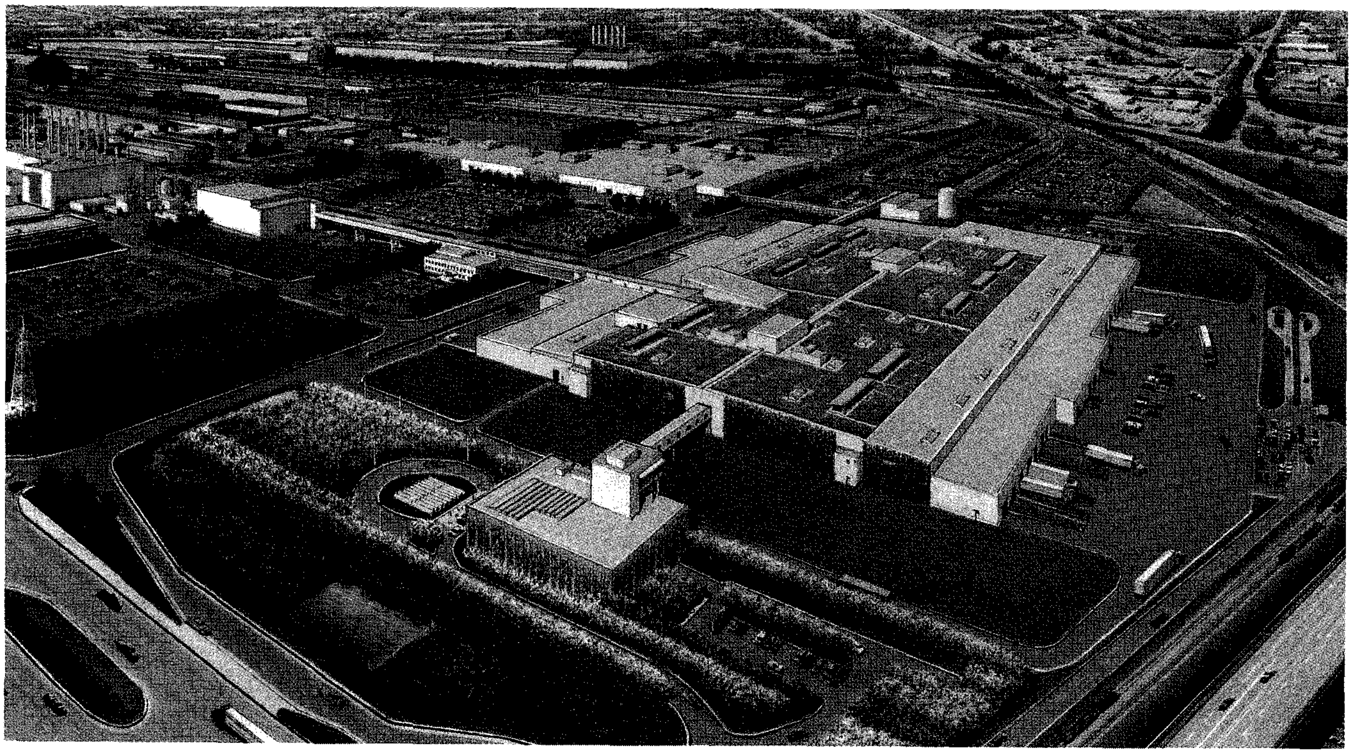
Having Ford participate, was, for Lampe, further proof of how far the LOHAS idea had come. "We have been working toward trying to get more mainstream business involvement," he said. "So suddenly here's one of the top companies in the U.S. appearing at the conference. Ford has been willing to take a risk."

As David Johnston, a panelist who spoke about green architecture and building, put it, "Taking care of our kids, of the next generation, is the common denominator. This is a movement, not just a market. And this is just the beginning."

MICHELLE ANDONIAN PHOTOGRAPHY

*Top: A roof at Ford's Rouge Center in Dearborn, Michigan. Bottom: Site plan for Rouge Center. It is emerging as a landmark of sustainable design and manufacturing.*

**This is not environmental philanthropy. It's sound business.**



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Ford

Escape Hybrid

*Available Summer 2004. **Based on Ford preliminary data, over 35 city mpg, front-wheel drive.
†Based on Escape Hybrid increased fuel economy and lower emissions and award-winning Dearborn Truck Plant.

planning to bolster Palestinian terrorism as Israel withdraws from the Gaza Strip.

Iraqi Shiite militia leaders like Moqtada al-Sadr, the former American intelligence official said, are seen by the Israeli leadership as "stalking horses" for Iran—owing much of their success in defying the American-led coalition to logistical and communications support and training provided by Iran. The former intelligence official said, "We began to see telltale signs of organizational training last summer. But the White House didn't want to hear it: 'We can't take on another problem right now. We can't afford to push Iran to the point where we've got to have a showdown.' "

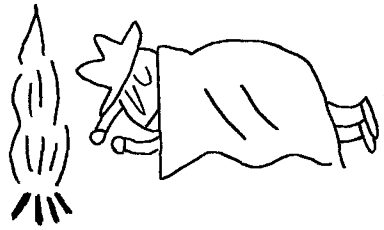
Last summer, according to a document I obtained, the Bush Administration directed the Marines to draft a detailed plan, called Operation Stuart, for the arrest and, if necessary, assassination of Sadr. But the operation was cancelled, the former intelligence official told me, after it became clear that Sadr had been "tipped off" about the plan. Seven months later, after Sadr spent the winter building support for his movement, the American-led coalition shut down his newspaper, provoking a crisis that Sadr survived with his status enhanced, thus insuring that he will play a major, and unwelcome, role in the political and military machinations after June 30th.

"Israel's immediate goal after June 30th is to build up the Kurdish commando units to balance the Shiite militias—especially those which would be hostile to the kind of order in southern Iraq that Israel would like to see," the former senior intelligence official said. "Of course, if a fanatic Sunni Baathist militia took control—one as hostile to Israel as Saddam Hussein was—Israel would unleash the Kurds on it, too." The Kurdish armed forces, known as the peshmerga, number an estimated seventy-five thousand troops, a total that far exceeds the known Sunni and Shiite militias.

The former Israeli intelligence officer acknowledged that since late last year Israel has been training Kurdish commando units to operate in the same manner and with the same effectiveness as Israel's most secretive commando units, the Mistaravim. The initial goal of the Israeli assistance to the Kurds, the former officer said, was to allow them to do what American commando units had been unable to do—penetrate, gather intelligence on, and then kill off the leadership of the Shiite and Sunni insurgencies in Iraq. (I was unable to learn whether any such mission had yet taken place.) "The feeling was that this was a more effective way to get at the insurgency," the former officer said. "But the growing Kurdish-Israeli relationship began upsetting the Turks no end. Their issue is that the very same Kurdish commandos trained for Iraq could infiltrate and attack in Turkey."

The Kurdish-Israeli collaboration inevitably expanded, the Israeli said. Some Israeli operatives have crossed the border into Iran, accompanied by Kurdish commandos, to install sensors and other sensitive devices that primarily target suspected Iranian nuclear facilities. The former officer said, "Look, Israel has always supported the Kurds in a Machiavellian way—as balance against Saddam. It's Realpolitik." He added, "By aligning with the Kurds, Israel gains eyes and ears in Iran, Iraq, and Syria." He went on, "What Israel was doing with the Kurds was not so unacceptable in the Bush Administration."

Senior German officials told me, with alarm, that their intelligence community also has evidence that Israel is using its new leverage inside Kurdistan, and within the Kurdish communities in Iran and Syria, for intelligence and operational purposes. Syrian and Lebanese officials believe that Israeli intelligence played a role in a series of violent protests in Syria in mid-March in which Syrian Kurdish dissidents and Syrian troops clashed, leaving at least thirty people dead. (There are nearly two million Kurds living in Syria, which has a population of seventeen million.) Much of the fighting took place in cities along Syria's borders with Turkey and Kurdish-controlled Iraq. Michel Samaha, the Lebanese Minister of Information, told me that while the disturbances amounted to an uprising by the Kurds against the leadership of Bashir Assad, the Syrian President, his government had evidence that Israel was "preparing the Kurds to fight all around Iraq, in Syria, Turkey, and Iran. They're being programmed to do commando operations."



The top German national-security official told me that he believes that the Bush Administration continually misread Iran. "The Iranians wanted to keep America tied down in Iraq, and to keep it busy there, but they didn't want chaos," he said. One of the senior German officials told me, "The critical question is 'What will the behavior of Iran be if there is an independent Kurdistan with close ties to Israel?' Iran does not want an Israeli land-based aircraft carrier"—that is, a military stronghold—"on its border."

Another senior European official said, "The Iranians would do something positive in the south of Iraq if they get something positive in return, but Washington won't do it. The Bush Administration won't ask the Iranians for help, and can't ask the Syrians. Who is going to save the United States?" He added that, at the start of the American invasion of Iraq, several top European officials had told their counterparts in Iran, "You will be the winners in the region."

Israel is not alone in believing that Iran, despite its protestations, is secretly hard at work on a nuclear bomb. Early this month, the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is responsible for monitoring nuclear proliferation, issued its fifth quarterly report in a row stating that Iran was continuing to misrepresent its research into materials that could be used for the production of nuclear weapons. Much of the concern centers on an underground enrichment facility at Natanz, two hundred and fifty miles from the Iran-Iraq border, which, during previous I.A.E.A. inspections, was discovered to contain centrifuges showing traces of weapons-grade uranium. The huge complex, which is still under construction, is said to total nearly eight hundred thousand square feet, and it will be sheltered in a few months by a roof whose design allows it to be covered with sand. Once the work is completed, the complex "will be blind to satellites, and the Iranians could add additional floors underground," an I.A.E.A. official told me. "The question is, will the Israelis hit Iran?"

Mohamed ElBaradei, the I.A.E.A. director, has repeatedly stated that his agency has not "seen concrete proof of a military program, so it's premature to make a judgment on that." David Albright, a former U.N. weapons inspector who is an expert on nuclear proliferation, buttressed the I.A.E.A. claim. "The United States has no concrete evidence of a nuclear-weapons program," Albright told me. "It's just an inference. There's no smoking gun." (Last Friday, at a meeting in Vienna, the I.A.E.A. passed a resolution that, while acknowledging some progress, complained that Iran had yet to be as open as it should be, and urgently called upon it to resolve a list of outstanding questions.)

The I.A.E.A. official told me that the I.A.E.A. leadership has been privately warned by Foreign Ministry officials in Iran that they are "having a hard time getting information" from the hard-line religious and military leaders who run the country. "The Iranian Foreign Ministry tells us, 'We're just diplomats, and we don't know whether we're getting the whole story from our own people,' " the official said. He noted that the Bush Administration has repeatedly advised the I.A.E.A. that there are secret nuclear facilities in Iran that have not been declared. The Administration will not say more, apparently worried that the information could get back to Iran.

Patrick Clawson, of the Institute for Near East Policy, provided another explanation for the reluctance of the Bush Administration to hand over specific intelligence. "If we were to identify a site," he told me, "it's conceivable that it could be quickly disassembled and the I.A.E.A. inspectors would arrive"—international inspections often take weeks to organize—"and find nothing." The American intelligence community, already discredited because of its faulty reporting on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, would be criticized anew. "It's much better," Clawson said, "to have the I.A.E.A. figure out on its own that there's a site and then find evidence that there had been enriched material there."

Clawson told me that Israel's overwhelming national-security concern must be Iran. Given that a presence in Kurdistan would give Israel a way to monitor the Iranian nuclear effort, he said, "it would be negligent for the Israelis not to be there."

At the moment, the former American senior intelligence official said, the Israelis' tie to Kurdistan "would be of greater value than their growing alliance with Turkey. 'We love Turkey but got to keep the pressure on Iran.' " The former Israeli intelligence officer said, "The Kurds were the last surviving group close to the United States with any say in Iraq. The only question was how to square it with Turkey."

There may be no way to square it with Turkey. Over breakfast in Ankara, a senior Turkish official explained, "Before the war, Israel was active in Kurdistan, and now it is active again. This is very dangerous for us, and for them, too. We do not want to see Iraq divided, and we will not ignore it." Then, citing a popular Turkish proverb—"We will burn a blanket to kill a flea"—he said, "We have told the Kurds, 'We are not afraid of you, but you should be afraid of us.' " (A Turkish diplomat I spoke to later was more direct: "We tell our Israeli and Kurdish friends that Turkey's good will lies in keeping Iraq together. We will not support alternative solutions.")

"If you end up with a divided Iraq, it will bring more blood, tears, and pain to the Middle East, and you will be blamed," the senior Turkish official said. "From Mexico to Russia, everybody will claim that the United States had a secret agenda in Iraq: you came there to break up Iraq. If Iraq is divided, America cannot explain this to the world." The official compared the situation to the breakup of Yugoslavia, but added, "In the Balkans, you did not have oil." He said, "The lesson of Yugoslavia is that when you give one country independence everybody will want it." If that happens, he said, "Kirkuk will be the Sarajevo of Iraq. If something happens there, it will be impossible to contain the crisis."

In Ankara, another senior Turkish official explained that his government had "openly shared its worries" about the Israeli military activities inside Kurdistan with the Israeli Foreign Ministry. "They deny the training and the purchase of property and claim it's not official but done by private persons. Obviously, our intelligence community is aware that it was not so. This policy is not good for America, Iraq, or Israel and the Jews."

Turkey's increasingly emphatic and public complaints about Israel's missile attacks on the Hamas leadership in the Gaza Strip is another factor in the growing tensions between the allies. On May 26th, Turkey's Foreign Minister, Abdullah Gul, announced at a news conference in Ankara that the Turkish government was bringing its Ambassador in Israel home for consultations on how to revive the Middle East peace process. He also told the Turkish parliament that the government was planning to strengthen its ties to the Palestinian Authority, and, in conversations with Middle Eastern diplomats in the past month, he expressed grave concern about Israel. In one such talk, one diplomat told me, Gul described Israeli activities, and the possibility of an independent Kurdistan, as "presenting us with a choice that is not a real choice—between survival and alliance."

A third Turkish official told me that the Israelis were "talking to us in order to appease our concern. They say, 'We aren't doing anything in Kurdistan to undermine your interests. Don't worry.' " The official added, "If it goes out publicly what they've been doing, it will put your government and our government in a difficult position. We can tolerate 'Kurdistan' if Iraq is intact, but nobody knows the future—not even the Americans."

A former White House official depicted the Administration as eager—almost desperate—late this spring to install an acceptable new interim government in Iraq before President Bush's declared June 30th deadline for the transfer of sovereignty. The Administration turned to Lakhdar Brahimi, the United Nations special envoy, to "put together something by June 30th—just something that could stand up" through the Presidential election, the former official said. Brahimi was given the task of selecting, with Washington's public approval, the thirty-one members of Iraq's interim government. Nevertheless, according to press reports, the choice of Iyad Allawi as interim Prime Minister was a disappointment to Brahimi.

The White House has yet to deal with Allawi's past. His credentials as a neurologist, and his involvement during the past two decades in anti-Saddam activities, as the founder of the British-based Iraqi National Accord, have been widely reported. But his role as a Baath Party operative while Saddam struggled for control in the nineteen-sixties and seventies—Saddam became President in 1979—is much less well known. "Allawi helped Saddam get to power," an American intelligence officer told me. "He was a very effective operator and a true believer." Reuel Marc Gerecht, a former C.I.A. case officer who served in the Middle East, added, "Two facts stand out about Allawi. One, he likes to think of himself as a man of ideas; and, two, his strongest virtue is that he's a thug."

Early this year, one of Allawi's former medical-school classmates, Dr. Haifa al-Azawi, published an essay in an Arabic newspaper in London raising questions about his character and his medical bona fides. She depicted Allawi as a "big husky man . . . who carried a gun on his belt and frequently brandished it, terrorizing the medical students." Allawi's medical degree, she wrote, "was conferred upon him by the Baath party." Allawi moved to London in 1971, ostensibly to continue his medical education; there he was in charge of the European operations of the Baath Party organization and the local activities of the Mukhabarat, its intelligence agency, until 1975.

"If you're asking me if Allawi has blood on his hands from his days in London, the answer is yes, he does," Vincent Cannistraro, the former C.I.A. officer, said. "He was a paid Mukhabarat agent for the Iraqis, and he was involved in dirty stuff." A cabinet-level Middle East diplomat, who was rankled by the U.S. indifference to Allawi's personal history, told me early this month that Allawi was involved with a Mukhabarat "hit team" that sought out and killed Baath Party dissenters throughout Europe. (Allawi's office did not respond to a request for comment.) At some point, for reasons that are not clear, Allawi fell from favor, and the Baathists organized a series of attempts on his life. The third attempt, by an axe-wielding assassin who broke into his home near London in 1978, resulted in a year-long hospital stay.

The Saban Center's Flynt Leverett said of the transfer of sovereignty, "If it doesn't work, there is no fallback—nothing." The former senior American intelligence official told me, similarly, that "the neocons still think they can pull the rabbit out of the hat" in Iraq. "What's the plan? They say, 'We don't need it. Democracy is strong enough. We'll work it out.' "

Middle East diplomats and former C.I.A. operatives who now consult in Baghdad have told me that many wealthy Iraqi businessmen and their families have deserted Baghdad in recent weeks in anticipation of continued, and perhaps heightened, suicide attacks and terror bombings after June 30th. "We'll see Christians, Shiites, and Sunnis getting out," Michel Samaha, the Lebanese Minister of Information, reported. "What the resistance is doing is targeting the poor people who run the bureaucracy—those who can't afford to pay for private guards. A month ago, friends of mine who are important landowners in Iraq came to Baghdad to do business. The cost of one day's security was about twelve thousand dollars."

Whitley Bruner, a retired intelligence officer who was a senior member of the C.I.A.'s task force on Iraq a decade ago, said that the new interim government in Iraq is urgently seeking ways to provide affordable security for second-tier officials—the men and women who make the government work. In early June, two such officials—Kamal Jarrah, an Education Ministry official, and Bassam Salih Kubba, who was serving as deputy foreign minister—were assassinated by unidentified gunmen outside their homes. Neither had hired private guards. Bruner, who returned from Baghdad earlier this month, said that he was now working to help organize Iraqi companies that could provide high-quality security that Iraqis could afford. "It's going to be a hot summer," Bruner said. "A lot of people have decided to get to Lebanon, Jordan, or the Gulf and wait this one out." ♦

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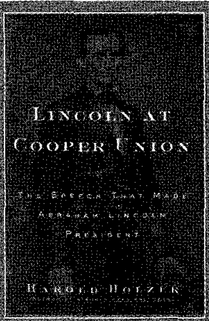

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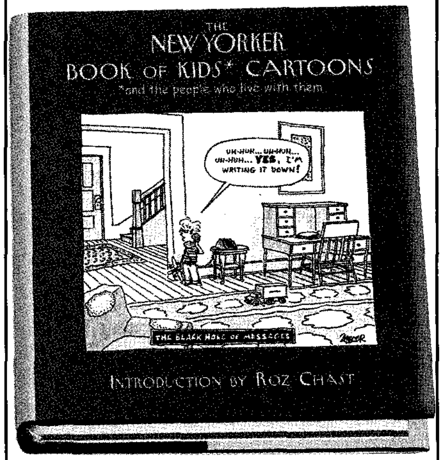
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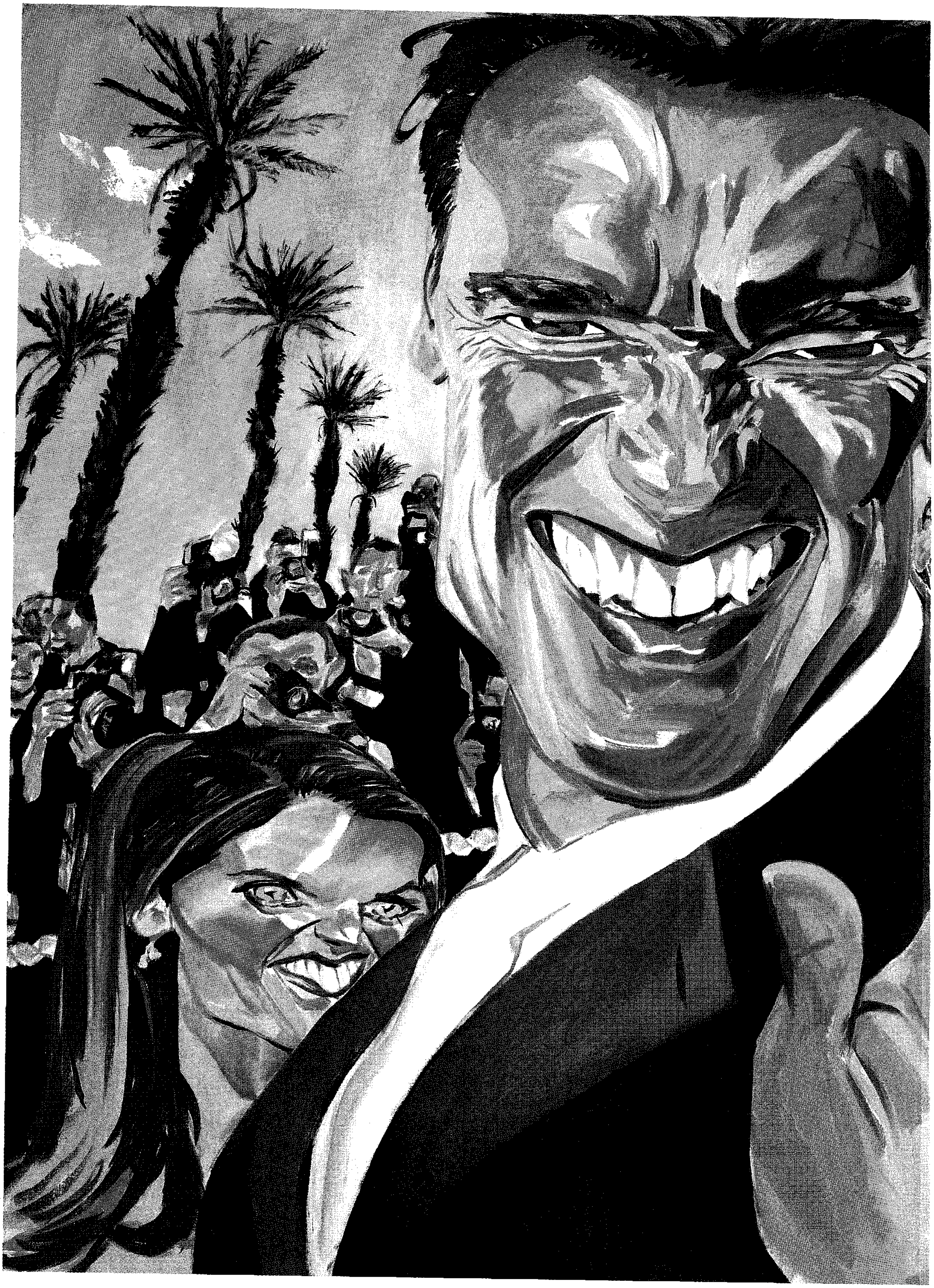


PHILIP BURKE

## LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA

# SUPERMODERATE!

*The new governor dazzles the celebrity-struck legislators of Sacramento.*

### BY CONNIE BRUCK

In late April, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was about to address some five thousand travel-industry representatives from around the world who had gathered at the Los Angeles Convention Center for their annual trade show. But first they were to watch a short film, made especially for the occasion. It was a barrage of mixed Arnold images. There was Arnold, last August, announcing on the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno" that he was going to run for governor. There he was on the campaign trail. But there he was as the Terminator, in "Terminator 3"! There he was delivering his State of the State address. There he was, the Terminator, again! As the film ended, a strange roar came from the back of the vast, dark auditorium; then a spot-light revealed a Terminator-like figure, in head-to-foot black leather and dark glasses, astride an enormous orange Indian motorcycle. Revving its engine, he rode it down an aisle, through the audience, and up a ramp onto the stage. He dismounted and strode to the center of the stage, and the words echoed through the hall, in that familiar Austrian accent: "I told you. I'll be back."

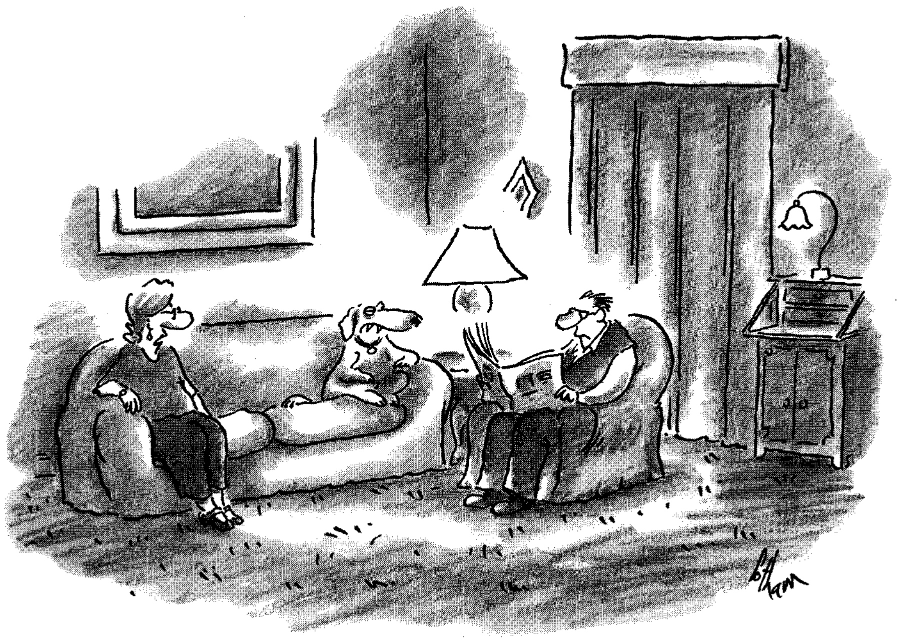
Suddenly, another figure—Schwarzenegger!—emerged from the wings, and walked to a microphone. Wearing a beautifully tailored cream-colored suit, he was a study in tawny-brown accents, with his skin a caramel tan, his hair a burnished-copper tint, and his tie a chocolate shade. After a wild ovation, Schwarzenegger thanked his stuntman. And then he addressed the crowd. "I thank you very much for changing the Constitution of the United States of America, and I accept your nomination to run for President." He paused. "Oh, wrong delegation. Sorry, wrong speech."

A week later, Schwarzenegger made a trip to Israel, with an itinerary befitting an American President: he met with the Israeli Prime Minister, and with many members of the Knesset; then he stopped off in Jordan to see the King; and, finally, he visited U.S. troops in Germany. There, in a speech to hundreds of soldiers, he used the changing-the-Constitution line again. "It's smart—he is getting it out there," a friend of his remarked, adding that it would take several years, at least, to pass the necessary amendment. There is a clause in the Constitution which states that only natural-born citizens are eligible for the Presidency; last summer, Senator Orrin Hatch proposed an amendment that would make it possible for anyone who has been a citizen for twenty years to hold the office. Schwarzenegger became a citizen twenty years ago.

As outlandish as such an ambition would have seemed just a short time ago, it is a measure of Schwarzenegger's effectiveness and popularity in his early months as governor that—but for the Constitution—it now seems eminently plausible. With a shrewdness surprising in a political novice, the former bodybuilder quickly defined the terms of his success as governor: he would provide action, in place of the political stasis that had affected the state, and he would set specific goals, and meet them. Whether the goals he set were optimal from a policy standpoint, and whether the state would rebound from its severe fiscal crisis because of them, was far less clear than the fact that he had achieved them. *That* was blazingly clear, because Schwarzenegger has combined marketing savvy and elaborate Hollywood staging to bombard Californians with this message: he is their action governor, just as he was an action hero—and together they will do the impossible!

All the bravura notwithstanding, he has positioned himself as a moderate, a throwback kind of Republican. From his first days in office—he was sworn in on

*"He transcends so many different worlds," Maria Shriver said of her husband, Arnold Schwarzenegger. Can he transcend the state's dire budget realities?*



"At our wedding ceremony, you made certain false statements."

• •

November 17th—he both preached and practiced bipartisanship. As a Republican governor with a Democratic-controlled legislature, he may have had little choice, but he has pursued the approach with such zest that he has won from Democratic legislators concessions that they never made to Gray Davis, his Democratic predecessor, who lost his office in a historic recall election, last October. When I interviewed Governor Schwarzenegger recently at the state capitol, in Sacramento, I asked him about his emphasis on bipartisanship. "I think that always in the history of this country people wanted to see action, people wanted to see things done, not to talk about it but to get it done," he said. The way to get things done, he continued, was to "bring people together. We should not care who is a Democrat and a Republican—both are good people, both are good parties. There is no evil party, or this is the bad party, the good party—and I never looked at it like that, you know?" He said that when he wanted to make bodybuilding more popular he had taken a similar approach. "It needed everybody. Women bodybuilding, male bodybuilding, the freaks, the good-looking guys, the power lifters, the weight lifters—everyone had to come together to make it grow. And so to me the key was, O.K., when I win, I will make an effort to bring everyone together, because then the people will see hope. And then—not only the people in California but the people of America."

As for bipartisanship, he said, "I'm most proud of that, because everyone said, 'That will never happen.' . . . The fun part about it is to do something when everyone says it can't be done. . . . This is exactly what my life always has been about. When someone says you can't do it—you can imagine, when I was in Austria, you know, if I said to my mother, 'I want to be a world champion in bodybuilding,' she would have smacked me! 'Are you crazy?' She would go nuts, you know? And I had bodybuilding pictures all over my bedroom wall, and she said, 'What's wrong with this guy? He has naked guys up there, and all the other guys have naked girls.' You know? So I thrive on that, when someone says, you know, that it can't be done."

Shortly after Schwarzenegger first won the Mr. Universe title, in 1967, at the age of twenty, Reg Park—a bodybuilding champion who had become an actor, and whom Schwarzenegger idolized—invited him to his home in Johannesburg. Park's son, Jon Jon, a Los Angeles fitness trainer who has been a friend of Schwarzenegger's for decades, recalled that, during the visit, "he showed my dad a list of what he wanted to achieve. He had already decided he wanted to have the best physique in the world. He wanted to emulate my dad in terms of getting into movies. Then he wanted to direct movies. Then he wanted to get into politics."

Schwarzenegger had known as a youth that he wanted to escape the confinement of Austria; he felt that he was destined for a greatness he could not achieve there. His mother, Aurelia, was a housewife; his father, Gustav, was the police chief in the village of Thal, but that important-sounding job was very modest. ("His father's office was like a barn," Arnold's friend Neal Nordlinger, who visited Thal with Arnold after they met, in the seventies, said. "Arnold grew up in very, very tough circumstances.") As a young boy, Arnold was weak and sickly; he had a handsome older brother, Meinhard, whom their father favored. But Arnold would often watch television or movies, and picture himself, very differently, on the screen—and then imagine others seeing him there. As he explained in an article in *Rolling Stone*, in 1976, "At that point, I didn't think about money. I thought about the fame, about just being the greatest. I was dreaming about being some dictator of a country or some savior like Jesus. Just to be recognized."

He cast around for a pursuit in which he could be the best; he tried soccer, but, as he later recalled, "I didn't like that too well, because there I didn't get the credit alone if I did something special. I just avoided team sports from then on." He fixed on bodybuilding, and, by the age of fifteen, he knew he'd found his calling. He quickly came to understand that a positive mental attitude was critical; it affected his rivals, and the judges. Some people, he thought, looked like winners, and others looked like losers, and he was determined never to show such vulnerability himself.

Schwarzenegger was brought to this country in 1968 by the bodybuilding impresario Joe Weider, and was soon marketing himself furiously; he established mail-order training courses, sold photo albums, T-shirts, and posing trunks, and held seminars. In the early seventies, he began using his competition winnings to invest in small apartment buildings in Venice, California, and eventually his real-estate holdings grew to include office buildings and shopping malls.

Ultimately, he attained his supremacy

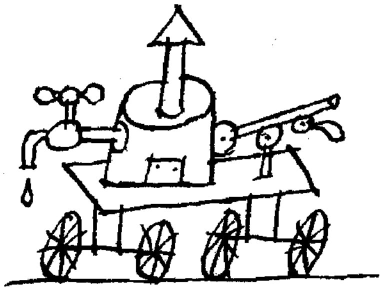
in bodybuilding through a combination of natural physical advantages, indomitable drive, an extraordinary talent for manipulation, and a willingness to do whatever it took to win. Franco Columbu, a former bodybuilding champion, who has long been Schwarzenegger's closest friend, arrived in this country from Europe about eight months after Schwarzenegger and was his roommate for several years in Santa Monica. Columbu recalled that in 1969 Schwarzenegger lost the Mr. Olympia competition to Sergio Oliva, a statuesque Cuban bodybuilder known as The Myth. The next year, Columbu continued, Schwarzenegger was determined to vanquish Oliva. Describing that competition, Columbu said, "This shows Arnold's cleverness. He and Sergio were competing, and the judges could not decide between the two of them. They were posing forever. Finally, Arnold turned to Sergio and said, 'Let's go.' Sergio turned around and, without saying goodbye to the audience, he left. Arnold took two steps, as though to follow him, but went only to the center, and then he turned to the judges, and he motioned to the audience like 'He left!' And he started posing, posing, posing—and that was it! He did it! Some people called it a trick. Sergio was so demoralized, he lost every time after that. Arnold won every time."

Still, it was like being king of a sideshow rather than the star attraction in the big tent. The documentary "Pumping Iron," released in 1977, introduced Schwarzenegger to a wider world, and helped make weight lifting a national pastime. Suddenly, Schwarzenegger was being photographed by Candice Bergen, having his portrait painted by Jamie Wyeth, and being fêted at Elaine's with a group that included Andy Warhol, Rudolf Nureyev, and (most thrillingly to Schwarzenegger, who was a Kennedy fan) Jacqueline Onassis. His metamorphosis had begun in earnest. "Arnold was one of the most ingenuous, naïve people I've ever met—the greenhorn to end all greenhorns," said George Butler, the co-producer and co-director of "Pumping Iron," who had met Schwarzenegger in 1972. Over breakfast at the Pancake House in Santa Monica, he listened as Schwarzenegger told him about his master plan, and his recurrent dream that he was king of all the earth.

Not long after Schwarzenegger attained his newfound celebrity, in 1977, his press agent got him an invitation to the Robert F. Kennedy Tennis Tournament, in Forest Hills, New York. There, he met Maria Shriver, a twenty-one-year-old graduate of Georgetown University, whose parents were Eunice Kennedy Shriver and Robert Sargent Shriver. Maria brought Arnold back to Hyannis Port for the rest of the weekend. This was the famous occasion when Arnold, upon being introduced to Eunice Shriver, said, "Your daughter has such a great ass!"

In January, 1981, Schwarzenegger started filming "Conan the Barbarian," his first high-grossing movie. " 'Conan' was tailor-made for Arnold," said Tom Pollock, a former head of Universal Studios, who first met him in 1976. "He was *supposed* to speak with an accent. And his position as Mr. Olympia fed into it, because the character in the Robert Howard books was the strongest man in the world. It was as if you had a guy who could fly to play Superman." One of the movie's memorable lines occurs when Conan says that he likes to "crush enemies, see them driven before you, and hear the lamentations of their women."

When "The Terminator" was released, in 1984, it established Schwarzenegger as the archetype of the superhuman figure who does the impossible. Over the years, hundreds of millions of dollars were spent to reinforce this image, which was marketed to young males, especially, worldwide. Many stars begrudge the demands made on them to promote their films, but Schwarzenegger, Pollock said, "was the most tireless promoter in the history of show business." Schwarzenegger took an intense interest in everything, from over-all strategy to the size of the type on a poster to the complex statistical data that come from "tracking," a system of phone polls conducted before a movie opens. He would appear anywhere, from the Jay Leno show to Moscow to the opening of a supermarket.



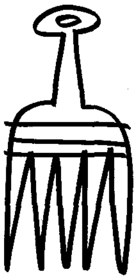
The overseer of much of this activity was Maria Shriver, whom Schwarzenegger married in 1986, after a nine-year courtship. Arnold took her to marketing meetings, saying that he respected her judgment and that she was a media expert. (A longtime TV reporter, she has been an NBC news correspondent since 1986.) Schwarzenegger reads very little, and it was difficult even to get him to read scripts—but Shriver read them. According to several people who have dealt with her in connection with Arnold's movie career, she was tough, often intimidating, with a harder edge than her husband. "She was always very concerned about Arnold's image," one person who has known her for years said. "She was always wanting to be sure he didn't look foolish, wanting him to be taken more seriously. She would read the scripts, and say, 'Arnold shouldn't be doing this.' She would see the trailer. She would want to know about distribution. She would get involved with the marketing people, demanding things from them, and they didn't like it. They were working for Arnold, not Maria, and here she was, ordering them around. It would be, 'Do you know *x*?' 'Why don't you?' 'Well, find it out!' "

For a number of years, Schwarzenegger was the highest-paid star in Hollywood. "He was always the one who broke the barrier, from ten million dollars, to twelve million, to fifteen million," Pollock, who made a number of Schwarzenegger movies at Universal Studios, said. By the late nineties, however, Schwarzenegger, in his early fifties, was too old for most action-hero roles, and he had made a number of comedy films that did poorly. "As he got older, it was rough—he wasn't getting offered a lot of movies," a Hollywood agent who knew him well told me. In 1997, Schwarzenegger fired Lou Pitt, an agent at International Creative Management, who had represented him since "Conan." More unsuccessful movies ("End of Days," "The 6th Day," "Collateral Damage") followed. But in 2003 Schwarzenegger made "Terminator 3"—for which he received about thirty million dollars. "He held out for that money for a couple of years," the Hollywood agent continued. "For that one movie, he could do it, because they wouldn't really want to try to do a 'Terminator' movie with someone else."

"Terminator 3" brought him back into

the stratosphere of Hollywood salaries. Now he often claims that, because he decided it was time to "give something back," he walked away from his movie career when he was the highest-paid star in the world.

Long before Schwarzenegger set out on his political career, he had begun addressing those elements which might hamper it. In 1991, he bought the rights to a series of unpublished photographs of him with nude women which George Butler had taken for *Playboy*. He also bought the rights to "Pumping Iron"; he subsequently sold the film to Home Box Office, and it has been aired dozens of times. In addition, he bought the outtakes, which contained some provocative material. According to an old book proposal of Butler's that was quoted in the New York *Times* a few days before the election, Schwarzenegger mused in the outtakes about "the feeling like Kennedy had, you know, to speak to maybe fifty thousand people at one time and having them cheer, or like Hitler in the Nuremberg stadium. And have all those people scream at you and just being in total agreement with whatever you say." There had been persistent rumors that his father had been a Nazi, and also stories about Arnold's doing Nazi salutes, and marching around his apartment to Nazi music, during his bodybuilding days in the seventies.



If Schwarzenegger wanted to exercise a kind of preëmptive damage control, he found the perfect agent in Rabbi Marvin Hier. Flamboyant, savvy, and promotion-minded, Hier has built a substantial enterprise on the base of the Holocaust. Sponsored in part by the wealthy Belzberg family, Hier founded the Simon Wiesenthal Center (named for the famed Nazi hunter) in Los Angeles in 1977, and today it is one of the fastest-growing Jewish organizations in the world. In 1993, Hier opened the fifty-five-million-dollar Museum of Tolerance, adjacent to the center. Over the years, some members of other Jewish organizations have criticized him for his aggressive tactics, marketing blitzes, and lobbying for millions of dollars from state and federal governments, a practice that encourages a blurring of boundaries between church and state. Hier's critics have not impeded him. His latest project is a two-hundred-million-dollar Museum of Tolerance in Jerusalem, designed by Frank Gehry; the groundbreaking ceremony was held on May 2nd, and the keynote speaker was Schwarzenegger.

Hier told me that Schwarzenegger had called him in 1984, saying that he wanted to attend an upcoming fund-raising dinner. Since then, Schwarzenegger has attended dozens of events sponsored by the Wiesenthal Center; become the biggest donor of all Hollywood stars; raised millions of dollars from friends and associates on his movie projects; and spoken at fund-raisers around the country. Hier has been to numerous parties at the Schwarzenegger home, and the two have become good friends. But it was not until six years after they met, Hier said, that "a call came that I wasn't prepared for." Schwarzenegger asked Hier to investigate what his father had done during the war. Hier found that Gustav had indeed applied for membership in the Nazi Party, in 1938, but that he was not wanted for criminal prosecution after the war and therefore, Hier concluded, he was not a war criminal.

Schwarzenegger's political persona, like so much else about him, was a work in progress. Not long after arriving in this country, Franco Columbu recalled, he and Schwarzenegger had watched President Nixon on television and decided that Nixon, and the Republicans, represented the opposite of the Socialist mentality in Europe that they had fled. Schwarzenegger's own experience made him an intuitive believer in self-reliance, but on social issues Maria and her family eventually had a moderating influence on him. On abortion, Schwarzenegger is pro-choice. According to Columbu, "Arnold would say, 'If you have sex with a woman for fifteen minutes and then you leave, why should she have to go through pregnancy for nine months and have a child? It's ridiculous!'"

For Schwarzenegger, however, the Republican hero was not Nixon but Ronald Reagan. ("I idolized him," he said recently.) Schwarzenegger saw himself as a businessman above all, and he felt comfortable with fiscal conservatism and a free-market philosophy. The economist Milton Friedman's 1980 "Free to Choose" TV series so impressed Schwarzenegger that he sought Friedman out, and he introduced a segment of the new "Free to Choose" series that aired in 1990. Through Friedman, he met former Secretary of State George Shultz. Schwarzenegger had long admired the investor Warren Buffett, for his business achievements and also for his ability to talk about a complex subject in a way that made it come alive. They became friends. Referring to Buffett, Schwarzenegger told me, "And he always said, 'If you ever run for governor'—this is a Democrat, right, talking—he said, 'if you ever run for governor, I'll move to California, and I will campaign for you, and do the fund-raisers for you. I'll give up everything that I have.'" Schwarzenegger also began cultivating political relationships around the world. Paul Wachter, a close friend and financial adviser, recalled that when the two went abroad on business trips Schwarzenegger often had an appointment to see the leader of whatever country they were visiting.

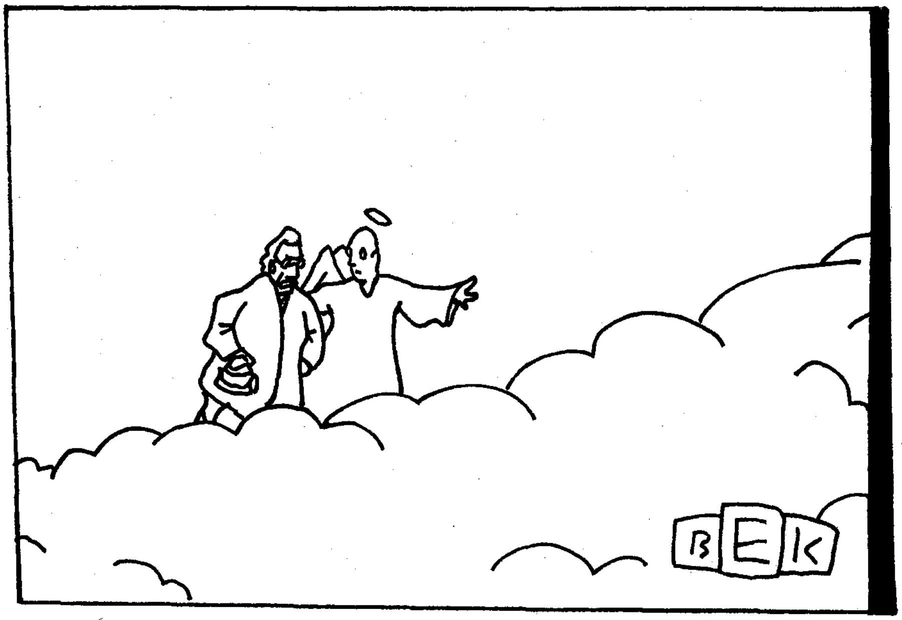
Schwarzenegger stepped out onto the political stage for the first time in 1988, when he campaigned for George H. W. Bush in his Presidential race. After Bush took office, he appointed Schwarzenegger to head the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. "Bush senior was a kind of godfather," Wachter said. "He embraced Arnold and gave him a platform." Schwarzenegger, for his part, contributed a weight room to Camp David. As the council's ambassador, Schwarzenegger travelled to all fifty states, meeting with governors and visiting schools. When he saw the governor of California, Pete Wilson, he told him that he wanted to start a California Fitness Council. "Wilson said, 'Terrific, but the state has no money,'" Camden McEfee, who was a special assistant to Bob White, Wilson's chief of staff, recalled. "In quintessential Arnold fashion, he took every 'No' out of the equation." Schwarzenegger said that he would expect no state money but would raise the funds himself. After White left the governor's office, in 1997, he formed a political-consulting firm, California Strategies, which McEfee later joined. Schwarzenegger became a client.

In early 2001, Schwarzenegger was considering running for governor against the Democratic incumbent, Gray Davis, in the 2002 election, and White assigned a number of people to work with him. One consultant recalled that Maria Shriver pinpointed issues that she thought Arnold ought to be talking about. "Maria was directing what she wanted," the consultant said. "She is more articulate. Arnold is at his best when he's being humorous, at his worst when he has to explain a position in detail." Joseph Rodota was assigned to explain policy issues to Schwarzenegger. The first task for Rodota, whose specialty was opposition research, was to read virtually all the articles in which Schwarzenegger had been quoted, going back to his bodybuilding days. He said that he found a quite consistent political philosophy—"very much about personal freedom, economic freedom, the importance of education, a concern about people being left behind. He was not a wedge-issue kind of person."

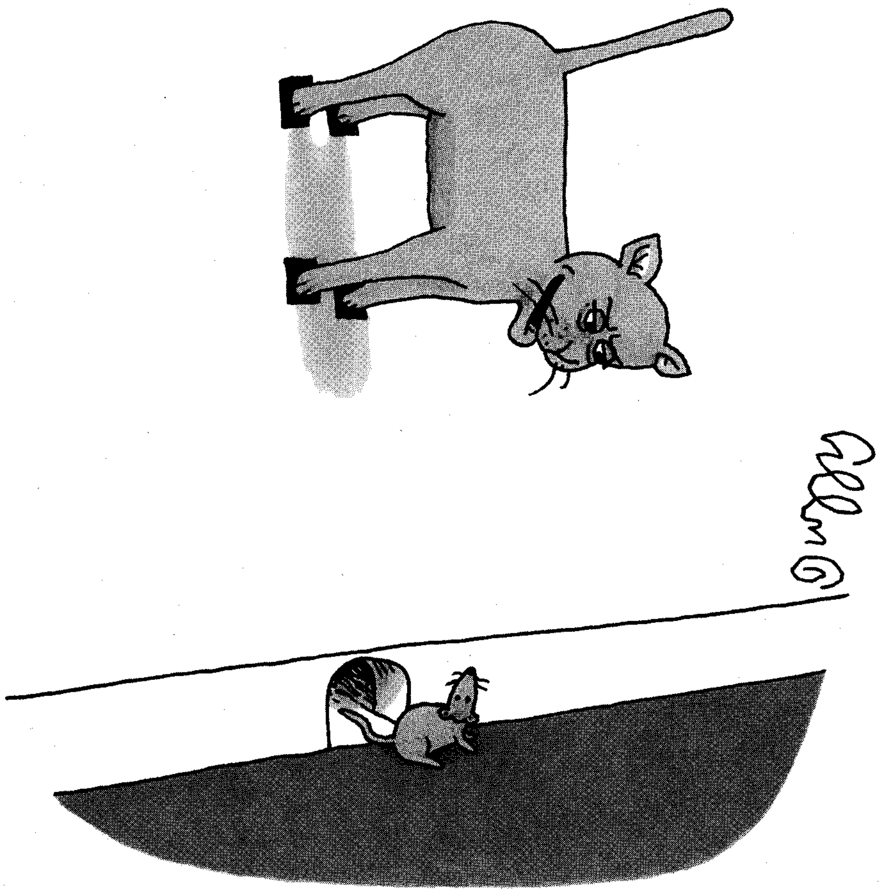
From the standpoint of opposition research, however, an article in the March, 2001, issue of the magazine *Premiere*, entitled "Arnold the Barbarian," was more significant. Garry South, Gray Davis's political consultant, immediately distributed it to the media. Allegations in the article ranged from Schwarzenegger's groping women to having a sexual encounter with a willing woman. Many who have known Schwarzenegger told me that the general behavior portrayed in the article was familiar to them; while some women have undoubtedly been pleased by the star's attentions, others have been repelled—and Schwarzenegger has been impervious to the difference. Once, when Schwarzenegger was shooting a movie in Mexico, he went to the home of the Mexican artist Francisco Zuñiga, to look at some sculptures, according to someone who was at the Zuñiga house that day. At a lunch served by Zuñiga's wife, Schwarzenegger was seated next to the young girlfriend of Zuñiga's son; he began stroking her arm, this person recalled, and then he remarked, to his lunch companions, "You know, the thing I love about Mexican women is how furry their pussies are."

In the end, Schwarzenegger decided not to run for governor in 2002 but to campaign for a ballot initiative instead. The initiative process had been written into California's constitution in 1911 (as had the recall). A Progressive-era instrument designed to let "the people" check the excesses of a state government dominated by special interests like the Southern Pacific Railroad, it gave voters the right to pass laws by placing initiatives on the ballot and voting for them. A watershed moment in the history of the modern initiative occurred in 1978, with the passage of California's famous Proposition 13, which drastically cut property taxes and ushered in an era of badly diminished public services. Proposition 13 also introduced a period of explosive growth in the initiative process itself. Since then, the initiative has become almost the opposite of what its progenitors intended, with its populist ethic largely subverted. Indeed, the process of getting an initiative on the ballot has become so expensive that it is undertaken mainly by extremely wealthy individuals, powerful political figures, and well-funded political and economic entities—including those which were originally meant to be countered, like the Southern Pacific. Even worse, though, from a public-policy standpoint, the profusion of initiatives—often ill-conceived and fundamentally contradictory—has reduced governmental discretion and made it much harder for legislators to respond effectively to changing situations. It is a peculiarly vicious cycle: the more hamstrung legislators are, the more direct democracy (through initiatives) trumps representative democracy, and the more unworkable the system becomes.

For his ballot initiative, known as Proposition 49, Schwarzenegger chose the issue of after-school programs for students in elementary and junior high schools—a topic about which he was knowledgeable, both from his work with the fitness councils and with the Inner-City Games Foundation, an organization that he had created in 1995. He assembled a sophisticated campaign team, composed, in part, of the Wilson alumni. At the start, he sat down with important constituencies across the political spectrum—from anti-tax ideologues to the teachers' union—and he crafted the initiative so cleverly that he managed to please nearly all of them. He used Proposition 49 as a chance to get to know people in the state who could be useful in the future—teachers, mayors, sheriffs, police officers, district attorneys, school-board members, county supervisors, Sacramento politicians, labor-union members. He created a Web site, joinarnold.com, inviting those who logged on to read about him or watch a video of him or listen to him. The ten-million-dollar campaign (he contributed a million dollars himself) flooded the airwaves with commercials. As the vote approached, he went to town-hall meetings and rallies packed with fans. There was little opposition, but the League of Women Voters of California and a number of editorial pages did try to deflect his hard sell. "Proposition 49 is a bad approach to a good cause," Barbara Inatsugu, the president of the league, said. By mandating



*"I would have stayed in Purgatory if I'd known this was going to be such a schlep."*



"Velcro!"

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the allocation of funds to these programs, she argued, it would restrict government's ability to assign revenues where children needed them most. "In fact," Inatsugu said on National Public Radio, "it could hurt children more than it could help them."

Schwarzenegger waved away such concerns with a decisive sound bite: "This is the best, safest, soundest initiative ever written, and that's why it's going to succeed."

On November 5, 2002, when Republicans lost every statewide election in California, Schwarzenegger's initiative passed, with support from nearly fifty-seven per cent of the voters—many of them the women, the moderates, and the swing voters whom Republicans in the state have generally lost in the past decade. It was an auspicious début for Schwarzenegger. However, the prospects for the kids who were supposed to benefit from the after-school programs were not nearly as bright. "Prop 49 was a new type of animal," George Gorton, one of Schwarzenegger's political consultants and a member of the Wilson team, explained. "It's not funded through deficit spending, or from raising taxes. It says, When you have $1.5 billion worth of growth in the state's general fund, then the next monies"—about half a billion dollars a year—"go to this."

After the stock-market bubble burst in 2001, state revenues fell sharply. Rather than raise taxes or make severe spending cuts, the state resorted to deficit spending, borrowing, and accounting gimmicks. By 2003, California was in such dire fiscal straits, and politicians were so deadlocked over how to deal with the crisis, that the state was given the lowest credit rating of any in the country. Prop 49 was designed to be implemented in 2004; by then, if the state's economy had recovered sufficiently, the funding would be triggered. That, of course, has not occurred. Gorton now predicts that the initiative will probably not go into effect for at least five or six years. He seemed sanguine about that, though; he told me that if Schwarzenegger had used either deficit spending or a tax increase to fund his after-school programs—to make them a current reality, instead of a future hope—it would have hurt him in his campaign for governor.

In April, 2003, Schwarzenegger travelled to Washington to see President Bush's adviser Karl Rove. It was well known that Schwarzenegger was considering a run for governor in 2006; but Rove had been quietly promoting the national-security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, for the job, suggesting to reporters, in remarks that could not be attributed to him, that Rice was giving it serious consideration. Now, as Rove and Schwarzenegger walked down a White House corridor, they bumped into Rice. "That's your competition for 2006," Rove said to Schwarzenegger, according to George (Duf) Sundheim, the chairman of the California Republican Party. Contending with Rice and her White House backing seemed a daunting proposition for Schwarzenegger; polling at the time showed that she had a huge advantage over him—sixty-six per cent to seventeen—according to Sundheim. But Schwarzenegger did not necessarily have to wait for 2006, and could even escape a Republican primary, where his moderate views on social issues would seriously impair his chances. Within weeks of Gray Davis's inauguration for a second term as governor, in January, 2003, the effort to recall him had got under way.

When Sundheim became head of the state Republican Party, shortly after Davis's inauguration, it didn't appear to be much of a position. "We were a million dollars in debt," he said, "and we had just lost every statewide election." Sundheim wanted to turn the Party's hard-right platform toward a more mainstream, inclusive party that could win—and he remembers the day when he decided that the recall might point the way. In June, in an attempt to reduce California's budget deficit of some thirty billion dollars, state officials raised the annual registration fee, or car tax, that California motorists pay on their vehicles. It was a massively unpopular decision. "I was at a Wal-Mart in San Bernardino," Sundheim said, "and people were lined up twenty-five deep, in hundred-degree heat, to give their signatures to recall the Governor. They were the people we had not been able to get—moms with carriages, Hispanics, African-Americans—they were all there. I said, Whoa! This is our chance to reach out!"

Sundheim believed that Schwarzenegger was the Republicans' best hope in the recall. But Schwarzenegger said that he was undecided. About a week before the filing deadline, in early August, George Gorton began telling journalists and others that Schwarzenegger was essentially out—a position that seemed all the more convincing given that Shriver was volubly resistant to her husband's entering politics. "I struggled a great deal with it," she told me, in a strong Boston accent that reminds one of her Kennedy lineage. "I felt I had a nice thing going—in terms of my job, in terms of his job. I wasn't looking for this gig, as they say." When she married him, she said, "I knew that people thought I'd lost my mind. But, for me, Arnold and I are incredible, as he said, soul mates." And, in marrying him, she said, "I did do something different—it's just that, as my friend says, God smacked me back! It's ironic, the way it turned out."

Richard Riordan, the former mayor of Los Angeles and a Republican, had concluded that he would run only if Schwarzenegger did not. The two are good friends; on the weekend before Schwarzenegger's announcement, Arnold, Maria, and their four children spent the afternoon at the Riordan home. Riordan, too, believed that Schwarzenegger was not running. Indeed, hours before Schwarzenegger's announcement, Riordan met with the Republican congressman David Dreier, and, over a long lunch at Gladstone's, in Malibu, the two drew up Riordan's campaign strategy. That evening, a friend saw Riordan at an event at Disney Hall and asked when he found out that Arnold was running. "When a reporter called me," Riordan replied.

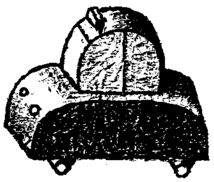
Sundheim later insisted he was convinced all along that Schwarzenegger was "playing possum," hoping to catch Senator Dianne Feinstein and other state Democrats unaware. California Democrats were facing a dilemma. The California recall ballot has two parts: the first asks whether a voter wants to replace the incumbent, and the second asks whom, if that incumbent is removed, on a list of people would the voter want to replace him. Polling showed that if a credible Democratic candidate emerged the recall would pass, so eager was even the state's plurality of Democrats to throw Davis out. A popular, highly respected senator, Feinstein would be heavily favored to win (whether Schwarzenegger was running or not), and other California Democrats were urging her to run. But Feinstein was adamantly opposed to the recall process. Bill Carrick, a Democratic political consultant who has worked for Feinstein for many years, said, "She had had the experience of a recall attempt herself, when she was mayor of San Francisco, and the extreme left and the extreme right ganged up on her. She had this principled position—it's one thing if an elected official has committed a crime, but if you're recalling someone because you don't like that person's politics it's abusive. And she had been supporting Davis, telling him he had to fight—how could she just turn around and run? But she did consider it for a long time."

Feinstein and other Democrats were convinced that Riordan, not Schwarzenegger, was going to run. And they viewed Riordan as unimposing, particularly since he had performed poorly in the Republican primary for governor in 2000. Had the Democrats thought that Schwarzenegger was running, Carrick said, that would have dramatically altered their calculus, since he was perceived as a far more threatening candidate. Finally, early on August 6th, Feinstein declared that she was not running—hours before Schwarzenegger announced that he was. If Schwarzenegger was lying low in order to mislead her, Carrick said, "That was very shrewd of him. Because, if she had known that Arnold was running, she probably would have run." He added that polling showed that Feinstein would have "demolished" Schwarzenegger.

Schwarzenegger's plan to announce his decision on the "Tonight Show with Jay Leno" bolstered the prevailing misconception. "Everybody thought no potential candidate in his right mind would announce on the Leno show, so if he's going on the show it must be to say no," Sundheim said. "But Arnold sees it differently. Arnold sees it as entertainment. He thinks, How do I get the person who isn't ordinarily engaged, who's just flipping channels, to pay attention to me?"

To Schwarzenegger's old friend Franco Columbu, the surprise decision was vintage Arnold. He had done much the same thing, for example, in 1980, when, five years after having retired from bodybuilding, he decided to compete for the Mr. Olympia title again, but misled virtually everyone about his intentions until the night before the contest (throwing his opponents into disarray). This time, though, no strategic coup could conceal the fact that he was a political neophyte, which became apparent in his faltering appearance on morning TV shows the following day. Shriver was particularly distressed by those performances, and blamed the advisers who had arranged them. She immediately assumed a strong role in the campaign. "She is very politically astute," said Carrick, who worked with her in Senator Edward Kennedy's bid for the Presidency, in 1980. Now, according to two advisers, at Shriver's instigation there was a reshuffling of staff, with the addition of Mike Murphy, a Republican strategist who had managed Jeb Bush's gubernatorial campaign in Florida and Senator John McCain's bid for the Presidency. Landon Parvin, a White House speechwriter for Ronald Reagan, joined the team, too. And Schwarzenegger was sequestered, studying sixteen hours a day under the tutelage of the Wilson team and its visiting experts in an enterprise that a team member referred to as "Schwarzenegger University." Since he is disinclined to read, any briefing memos had to be concise; he prefers to receive information orally.

The campaign appeared to lose its already shaky footing when Warren Buffett, whom Schwarzenegger had asked to join it as an economic adviser, spoke his mind in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal.* Buffett suggested that California's property taxes needed to be higher, though he stopped short of calling for the reversal of Proposition 13. Buffett made his point succinctly: his house in Omaha, Nebraska, is valued at about five hundred thousand dollars, and his annual tax bill is $14,401; one of his homes in Laguna Beach, California, is valued at four million dollars, and his annual tax bill is $2,264.



In the past twenty-six years, the loss of revenue resulting from the passage of Proposition 13 has had a devastating impact on California's public services—schools, universities, medical care—and its infrastructure, contributing to what the writer Peter Schrag calls the "Mississippification" of a state that was once the progressive model for the nation. The diminution of property tax has also meant that California is more heavily dependent for revenues on personal income taxes, which tend to be more volatile—when the stock-market bubble burst, its impact was that much greater. But, however damaging Proposition 13 has been, it has also become the symbol of the state's neo-populist fervor, and it is seen as untouchable. So Schwarzenegger convened a meeting of his financial advisory committee, the Economic Recovery Council, led by Buffett and George Shultz; and at a press conference, with a chastened Buffett at his side, he declared that if Buffett issued any more statements about Proposition 13 he would make him do five hundred sit-ups. Since then, Buffett has not uttered a word about Proposition 13. "Warren didn't have to be told—seeing the firestorm his remarks created—that it wasn't an idea whose time had come," said Robert Denham, a Los Angeles lawyer whom Buffett had brought in to help rescue the scandal-plagued Salomon investment bank, in 1991, and who became a Schwarzenegger financial adviser. "I was delighted, though, that Warren said it, because at least it reminded people that there's this giant gorilla in the closet that has to be dealt with sometime." He paused, and added, somewhat ruefully, "Don't know when and how."

Schwarzenegger insists that this episode actually worked to his advantage. "Because it showed leadership," he told me. "It was like, you know, here is the guy, one of the most powerful and richest guys in the world, that says 'A,' and the [candidate for] governor says 'B.' And not changing at all, one ounce, because he said that. I understand where he was coming from, but I believed that he was wrong."

The Schwarzenegger campaign was long on Hollywood theatrics and populist rhetoric, and short on substance. He swore that he would "terminate" special interests, used a broom to illustrate how he would "clean house" in Sacramento, and, as a crane dropped a giant weight onto an Oldsmobile Cutlass and crushed it, shouted, "*Hasta la vista,* car tax!" He largely avoided political reporters, but he made good use of right-wing talk radio, the entertainment press, and interviews on shows like "Oprah." Schwarzenegger skipped nearly all the candidate forums and debates, agreeing to participate in the single debate where questions were provided in advance. Even so, his performance there was only middling, but voters had such low expectations of his debate skills that they were impressed. (Schwarzenegger is fond of saying that it's fine with him that people have always underestimated him, because it only works to his advantage.)

In the last few days before the election, however, elements from his past threatened to derail him, when his quotes about Hitler, from George Butler's book proposal, surfaced in the *Times*. Members of the Schwarzenegger campaign were livid; Butler subsequently said that he had unearthed the transcripts of the "Pumping Iron" outtakes and found that Schwarzenegger had said he admired Hitler for his power but not for "what he did with it." Reporters asked Schwarzenegger to produce the outtakes or the transcripts, but—despite the fact that he had gone to great lengths to acquire them, and that he maintains a library containing virtually every article in which he has ever been quoted—he claimed that he did not know where they were. Rabbi Hier, who had come to Schwarzenegger's defense earlier in the campaign, when information emerged that his father had been a Storm Trooper, did so again.

Even more potentially damaging were stories in the Los Angeles *Times* which contained accounts from women who alleged that in the previous two decades, and as recently as 2000, Schwarzenegger had made unsolicited physical advances toward them, in many instances grabbing their breasts or putting his hand under their clothes; they described feeling humiliated, shaken, and infuriated by his actions. The first story, with accounts from six women, appeared on October 2nd, five days before the election. In subsequent stories, nine more women came forward with allegations. At first, the campaign issued a blanket denial; a key campaign aide, moreover, suggested to reporters that one of the women might have a criminal record. (She did not, and she has since filed a libel suit against the aide, the campaign, and the Governor.) Sundheim saw Schwarzenegger on the morning that the first L.A. *Times* story appeared, as he was preparing to address a rally. "I didn't know what he was going to say. I was behind the stage, and I saw him rehearsing, standing alone, off to the side, with note cards," Sundheim said. "He was practicing looking up and saying, 'I'm sorry.' " Schwarzenegger did apologize, in a convoluted way: "I know that the people of California can see through these trash politics. Yes. And let me tell you something—a lot of those, what you see in the stories is not true. But at the same time, I have to tell you, I always say wherever there is smoke, there is fire. . . . So I want to say to you, yes, I have behaved badly sometimes. . . . And, to those people that I have offended, I want to say to them that I am deeply sorry about that."

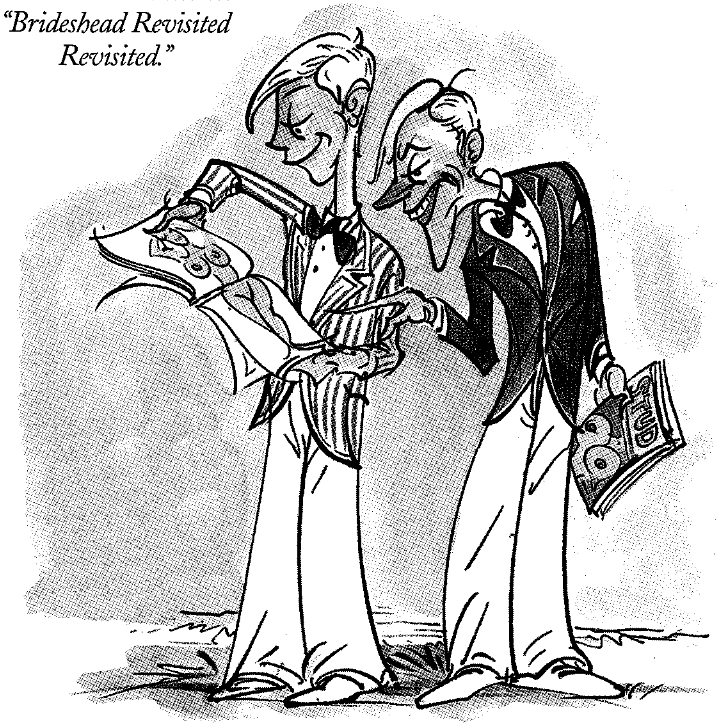
"I have what I call these canaries in the mine shaft—women who are swing voters," Sundheim said. He telephoned them just as the story broke. "They said, 'If Maria's at his side, he's got me; if she's not, he's lost.' " Sundheim had seen enough of Shriver to know that she could be a fighter if she was so inclined. "In the campaign headquarters, when Arnold entered, there was respect," he said, "but when Maria entered there was fear." Shriver has been explicit about how highly she values family loyalty. Someone who has known her for many years recalled that she was critical of Hillary Clinton for not defending her husband far more aggressively during the Monica Lewinsky imbroglio. Shriver accompanied Schwarzenegger as he swung through the state, sticking close to his side, patting his arm affectionately, kissing him for the cameras. She attacked the reports as "gutter journalism." In a harsh tone that conveyed just how little she thought of the women who had aired their grievances, she said, "You can believe someone who met him for five minutes thirty years ago, or you can believe me!"

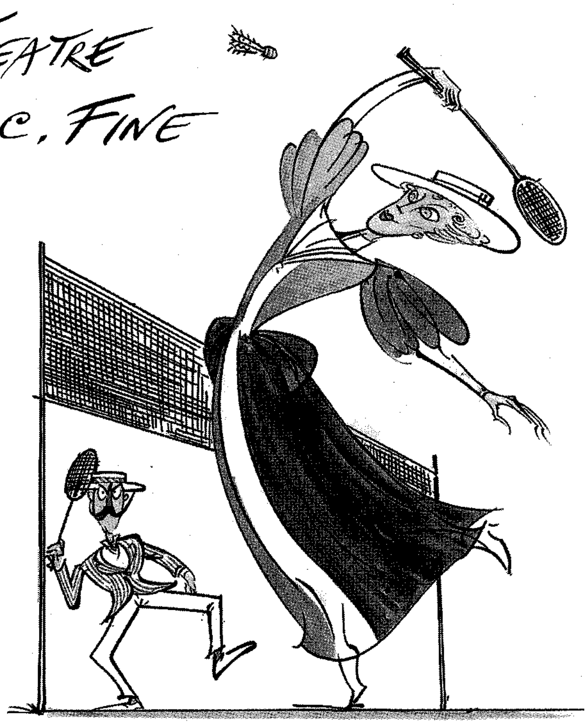
Sacramento is a bucolic, unhurried kind of place, where hitching posts still stand in front of buildings in the historic district, and many inhabitants greet one another as they pass on the street. Previous governors have had to struggle for media attention here, but when Schwarzenegger took office the capital was inundated with press from around the world. The combination of the recall and Schwarzenegger's celebrity changed Californians' general attitude; suddenly, politics mattered. Schwarzenegger knew, however,

SKETCHBOOK BY GERALD SCARFE AND ANDY BOROWITZ

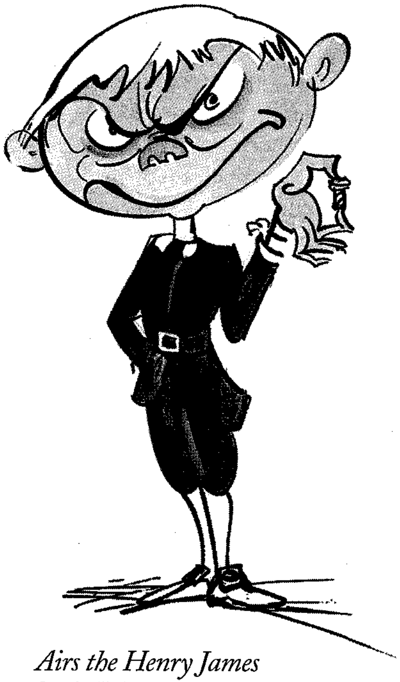
# MASTERPIECE THEATRE WORKS TO AVOID F.C.C. FINE

*Announces 100% heterosexual miniseries "Brideshead Revisited Revisited."*

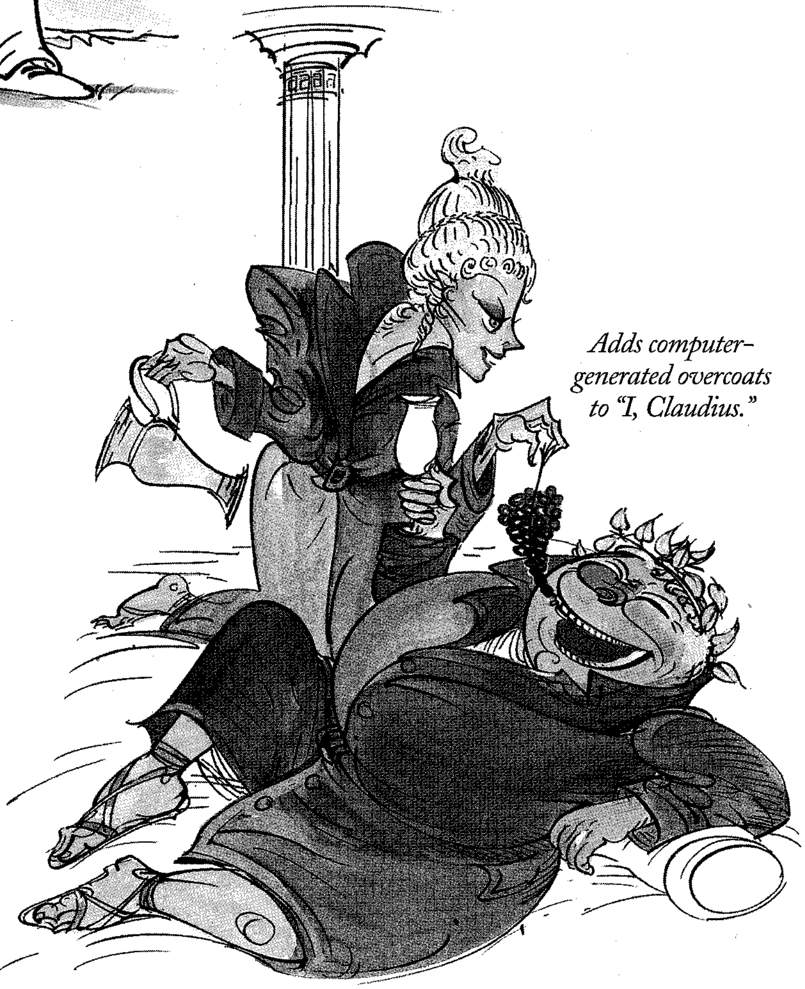




*Replaces adultery with badminton in "Madame Bovary."*



*Airs the Henry James classic "The Turn of the Metal Bolt-Thingy."*



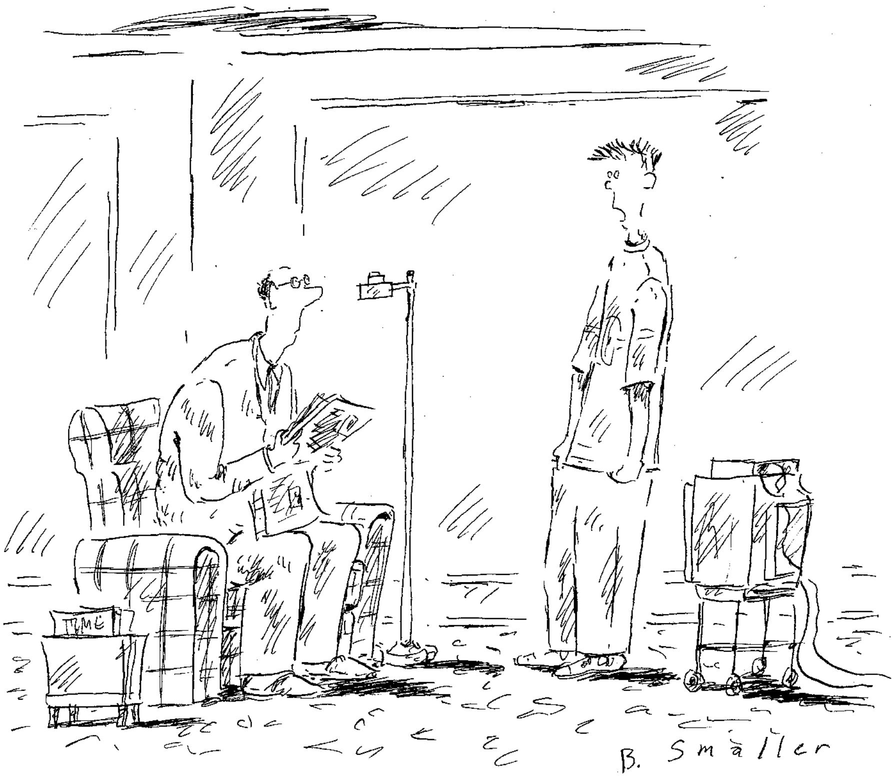
*Adds computer-generated overcoats to "I, Claudius."*

that all this momentum would dissipate if he did not find a way to pacify the warring California legislature. Thanks in large part to a redistricting deal struck by Democrats and Republicans after the 2000 census—it created solidly Democratic and Republican districts, which tend in each party's primary election to reward the more extreme and punish the more centrist—the legislature has become a place where nothing is more rare than common ground. Term limits—among the strictest in the nation—have aggravated the situation, as there is barely time for members to grow to trust someone across the aisle. Moreover, term limits have diminished the legislature's institutional strength; a longtime Assembly Speaker like Willie Brown had many more carrots and sticks at his disposal than does the current Speaker, Fabian Núñez, who is thirty-seven years old and was elected to the Assembly only a year and a half ago. And although the legislature is controlled by Democrats, California is one of only a few states that have a two-thirds-vote rule for passing a budget, a spending bill, or a state tax increase; so a rump minority can block any action. Such minorities have done so frequently in the past several years, producing a great deal of gridlock, which has fuelled voter anger. Individual legislators may be popular with their constituents, but polls have shown that the legislature, as a body, was more disliked than Davis.

Schwarzenegger took the measure of those who were in positions of power—Democrats in particular—and sought to disarm them. In the capitol building, he had a large canvas tent set up on the inner patio that is encircled by his horseshoe-shaped office complex, and invited legislators there to smoke cigars. Formidable politicians have long used this kind of camaraderie to good effect, but Schwarzenegger has an added edge. "Arnold brings heretofore unknown star quality to an all-powerful but backwoods place," Carole Migden, the chairwoman of the state Board of Equalization and an assemblywoman until December of 2002, said. "On a very personal level, the legislators feel outmatched, a little overwhelmed. . . . I think we've gotten pixillated." A Wilson team member who has observed Schwarzenegger in action commented, "Grown men get so silly in his presence." He has dispensed a steady stream of personal tokens. The dapper Willie Brown, the man many California Republicans loved to hate, received a hat from his favorite San Francisco clothier with a note inside that read, in part, "Help me run the state." Assemblyman Herb J. Wesson, Jr., who recently stepped down as Speaker, received a needlepoint pillow, stitched with the words "Need a lift?" (Wesson is short, and he has had a running joke with Schwarzenegger about how tall the Governor, who claims to be six feet two, really is.)

At the same time that he was constantly invoking his celebrity, Schwarzenegger used self-deprecating humor (about his role in a dreadful movie like "Hercules in New York," or his never having received an Oscar) to show that he did not have an inflated sense of his own importance. And—despite the fact that he had his name inlaid in large gold letters above the door to the governor's office, something that no previous governor had done—he has made gestures to minimize any air of imperium. When he wants to see Senate Leader John Burton—the single most powerful Democrat, by virtue of his position, longevity, and commitment to a liberal agenda—Schwarzenegger often goes to his office, rather than summoning him. (These office visits are a strikingly effective tool. When I asked Jim Brulte, the Senate Republican minority leader, whether he thought Schwarzenegger was an imperial governor, he responded, "No. In one day—my birthday—this governor was in my office twice. More times than Davis and Wilson together, in thirteen years.") And, when Fabian Núñez was sworn in as Speaker, Schwarzenegger appeared in the chamber in the final moments of the ceremony—something that a governor from the opposing party traditionally does not do. Núñez, one of twelve children, had thirty-five family members at the event, and Schwarzenegger offered to pose for photographs with them. At a press conference about half an hour after the ceremony, Núñez said, "The Governor is probably still there, taking pictures."

While Schwarzenegger was enlivening Sacramento, he was also zeroing in on legislators' weaknesses. Many legislators felt unnerved by Davis's recall and its possible implications for them in the 2004 elections, when the entire Assembly and half of the Senate are standing for reëlection. Schwarzenegger has probed that tender point at every opportunity. "If I would have put all of them on the ballot, they all would have been recalled—that's the reality of it," he has claimed. Shortly after he became governor, he threatened "severe casualties" if lawmakers did not agree to put his measures on the ballot.



"*How did you say 'Whatever' in the sixties?*"

Many Democrats would prefer tax increases for the state's wealthiest people, for drinkers, and for smokers, but Schwarzenegger has stated, publicly and privately, that he believes tax hikes would further cripple the state's economy. Instead, he has pursued a strategy of heavy borrowing, combined with severe budget cuts. He came up with a bond measure that would enable the state to borrow fifteen billion dollars, repaying it with interest over a nine-to-fourteen-year period; and he paired it with a spending-cap measure. But in order to place these two measures, Propositions 57 and 58, on the March 2nd ballot he needed a legislative vote. In early December, he began travelling to the districts of lawmakers facing tough reëlection fights, railing against them as "spending addicts," exhorting voters to call their legislators and demand that they vote for his plan. Then he changed course, and invited some legislators to accompany him on his visits to their districts. "Part of his strength is he always keeps people off balance," Joseph Rodota said. "The legislators don't know how to deal with him. They ignore him, they attack him, then they think they should work with him."

The Democratic assemblywoman Christine Kehoe, whose district, in San Diego, is being targeted by Republicans this November, recalled travelling on his private plane to her district. "We were talking about all kinds of things. He said most wives don't like their husbands smoking cigars, but Maria can't object because it was Sargent Shriver who introduced him to cigars. He had just started dating Maria, he was at the Shrivers' home, and after dinner Sargent offered him a cigar. He said, 'No, I don't smoke.' And Sargent said something like 'Aren't you man enough?' After that, he said, he smoked every night." But then the subject of his proposed budget cuts came up. "And when I said something simple about how the cuts will fall most harshly on those who can least afford them, he turned to George Plescia, a Republican assemblyman, and said, 'They've been overspending for years and now they don't want to face the penalty.' It was much more strident, as though his business sense was so offended by the fact that we could have let spending go as far as we did, even if cutting back falls on the elderly, children, the poor." Still, Schwarzenegger changed his mind on a proposed cut that had triggered a statewide protest—about two hundred and seventy-four million dollars, from services to the developmentally disabled—after receiving a call from Eunice Kennedy Shriver, who founded the Special Olympics.

Schwarzenegger won the legislative vote to put his measures on the ballot, but only after he compromised significantly with Democrats, replacing the spending cap that Republicans wanted with a much less restrictive balanced-budget amendment that would limit, though not prohibit, future borrowing. (When negotiations were at an impasse, Maria Shriver gave a speech in Sacramento to a women's group in which she scolded the legislators. "I say that if some of these legislators were children, we'd give them a time-out," she said. "We would teach them that with every person you can find common ground, that you should play nicely with them.") Schwarzenegger's deal-making skills and flexibility were impressive. But it was not a new solution to the state's budget crisis—hardly worthy of the "change agent" that his campaign billed him as. Gray Davis, too, had tried to cope with the deficit, through a measure to issue eleven billion dollars in bonds (the measure had been delayed by a court challenge). "Schwarzenegger jacked the eleven billion dollars in bonds up to fifteen billion dollars, but it's quite similar," Kehoe said. "And the balanced-budget amendment is a gesture toward spending restraint—it gives him cover in stumping for the largest deficit bond in the history of the state."

Schwarzenegger's own party has in some ways been more problematic for him. Many conservative Republicans are profoundly ambivalent; after having endured the electoral pounding of the past decade in California, they are almost giddy at having retaken the governorship, and with such a popular, powerful figure, but they are suspicious of his emphasis upon bipartisanship. He has many of the Wilson team working for him, including his chief of staff, Pat Clarey, who was Wilson's deputy chief of staff, and he has a number of staffers who formerly worked for Jim Brulte, a very conservative Republican (famous for having shown Republican members samples of ads that would be run in a Republican primary against anyone who voted for a tax increase). But he has appointed many Democrats and independents to key state jobs. His senior adviser is Bonnie Reiss, a liberal Democrat and environmental activist and a close friend of Shriver's. And Shriver spends one day a week in Sacramento.

Schwarzenegger enjoys making decisions by sitting at the head of a table and listening while the opposing sides fight it out. Still, it is an unconventional setup, and stirs Republican fears that he may be a Kennedy in disguise. "I don't blame them," Schwarzenegger told me. "I mean, you know, it's natural that they would think that, that it worries them, and they say, 'Oh, my God, that maybe has an influence on him.' " Referring to the Shriver and Kennedy families, he added, "I've been around now with them for twenty-seven years, almost, and hopefully learned some great things from them. But I'm still a Republican, so nothing has changed."

For her part, Shriver said, "I don't worry that some people are a little ruffled." She went on, "I don't care if you're a liberal Democrat or a conservative Republican, my job, the way I see it, is to watch out for Arnold. And that means sometimes liberal Democrats are mad, sometimes conservative Republicans are mad. I'm very aware that people go, 'Omigod, she's talking to him.' Well, too bad!

"The bottom line is, I speak to Arnold about everything," she continued. "It seems to me people should be worried if I didn't talk to my husband. Talk about old-fashioned!"

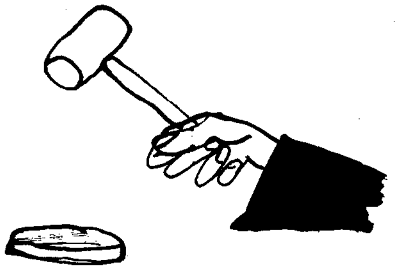
At the California Democratic Party convention, in mid-January, members agonized about how to handle the popular Governor, and left the decision about the Party's stance on the ballot measures to the party chairman, Art Torres. He and the party leaders eventually decided that they would support Propositions 57 and 58, and Senator Feinstein—whom Schwarzenegger had been courting relentlessly, and who gave her support reluctantly, after long deliberation—agreed to do TV commercials with him and to hold a joint press conference. ("I love your passion for Propositions 57/58!" Schwarzenegger said to a flustered-looking Feinstein.) But at the opening of the Republican Party convention, in Burlingame, on February 20th, little more than a week before the March 2nd vote, it was still not certain that delegates would vote to endorse the measures.

Schwarzenegger, of course, won world championships by outmaneuvering his opponents. After he was introduced by Sundheim at the convention on Friday evening, he told the crowd of about seven hundred Republicans that he had just sent a letter to the state's Attorney General, directing him to take legal steps to stop San Francisco from issuing wedding licenses to same-sex couples. It's questionable whether Schwarzenegger even had the authority to direct the Attorney General, an elected statewide officer, to do his bidding, but that did not matter here. Conventioneers sprang to their feet, clapping and cheering. He said he would deliver California to George W. Bush in November. Raucous cheers. He promised workers'-compensation reform. "As I said in my State of the State address, the time is over to just move boxes around—I want to blow them up!" Huge ovation. But when he called for the passage of Propositions 57 and 58 the room was suddenly subdued, except for the ruckus in a back corner, where Schwarzenegger's appointed cheerleaders screamed and jumped up and down. And when he said, "We will find common ground with the Democrats," and, also, "We will be the party of all Californians," applause was tepid, many people looked dour, and some shook their heads.

Still, the gay-marriage announcement had been a tonic for this assemblage. In the next thirty-six hours, Sundheim and his forces worked hard to round up support for 57/58 from every Republican delegate. There was considerable resistance from the more ideological delegates, who wanted sharp spending cuts instead. But on Sunday morning, shortly before the vote, Schwarzenegger appeared on "Meet the Press," and threw a little more oil on the fire. He said that it was important to take immediate action against gay marriage because the situation was in danger of spinning out of control: "All of a sudden, we see riots, we see protests, we see people clashing. The next thing we know, there is injured or there is dead people. We don't want to get to that extent." The San Francisco *Chronicle* published an editorial, entitled "CALM DOWN, GOVERNOR," chiding him for comments that were "reckless," "out of touch with reality," and "even dangerous." But in Burlingame the vote passed.

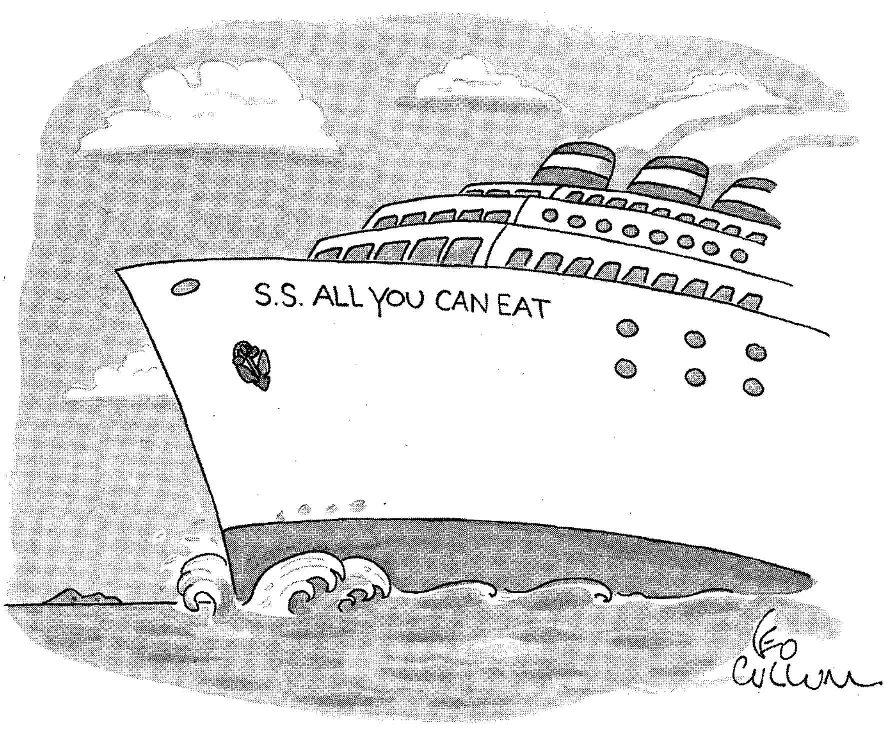
Those Republicans who were thrilled by Schwarzenegger's hard-line position—and on a social issue—may have felt somewhat betrayed a week later. In the final days before the March 2nd vote, Democratic support, particularly in the liberal stronghold of Northern California, was soft. Schwarzenegger went on the Jay Leno show, and when Leno, who is his friend, asked, "This gay-marriage thing—what's your position on this?," Schwarzenegger fixed him with a withering look. But then, seeming to recover, he said that if the people wanted to change the law "it's fine with me." Leno also introduced a "surprise guest"—Gray Davis. Schwarzenegger seemed taken aback at the sight of Davis, but the two talked amiably. It was, of course, all staged. It had been recommended to the Schwarzenegger campaign staff that this joint appearance would give "permission" to many Democrats, still rankling from the recall, to vote for Schwarzenegger's measures. And it was Schwarzenegger who had called Davis, on the day of the show, and—without mentioning that there was a softening in Democratic support for 57/58—invited him to appear.

As useful a platform as the Leno show is for Schwarzenegger, nothing allows him to display his star power the way his campaign events do. On the weekend before the vote, he set out on a bus tour, the "Road to Recovery Express." The kickoff rally was at a soundstage at Universal Studios. Like all Schwarzenegger events, this one seemed like a Hollywood production, a neat blending of show business and politics. Once again, as in his campaign for Proposition 49, Schwarzenegger had assembled a diverse coalition, from labor unions to the California Chamber of Commerce, from the United Farm Workers to the California Farm Bureau Federation. There was a sea of "Join Arnold, 57/yes/58" placards and banners; a red bus featured the Arnold countenance, slightly smiling, his eyes gazing upward; representatives from supporting groups, lined up across the stage, were wearing color-coded T-shirts (dark blue for taxpayer advocates, yellow for teachers, red for firefighters, green for environmentalists); and a cordoned-off press section included reporters from local, national, and international media. Dan Schnur, a political consultant who had worked for Pete Wilson when he was governor, commented, "The only time when I was with Wilson that we had that many cameras was during the L.A. riots." And the actor Rob Lowe, who introduced Schwarzenegger, suggested that the man who had been "the biggest movie star in the world" had now assumed his best role yet. "It turns out that he's not the superhero of the movies," Lowe declared. "He's a real man, and he belongs to us!"



Enter Arnold, to wild clapping, cheers, and the sounds of U2's "Beautiful Day." (During his campaign, the theme song was Twisted Sister's "We're Not Gonna Take It.") "Ar-nold, Ar-nold, Ar-nold, Arnold!" the crowd chanted. He did not so much walk as spring onto the stage, as though buoyed almost off the ground by the adulation. Aglow in the sunlight, bronzed as always, his hair styled to perfection, he was wearing a black cotton bomber-style jacket, which he had designed for this campaign, just as during his Hollywood career he had designed a jacket for each movie production. "It's wonderful to be back here at Universal Studios," Schwarzenegger began. "This studio brought me a lot of luck. 'Conan the Barbarian'! Remember that movie? And I campaigned for Proposition 49 here." He thanked Lowe ("He's such a sexy guy!") and Steve Westly, the state controller, whom he had tapped to be the campaign's Democratic co-chairman, and whom he referred to now, grinning, as "my twin brother." (Westly is short and slight.)

A month earlier, polls had found that voters were resistant to the idea of the state's borrowing its way out of its fiscal predicament; only a little over a third of voters favored Proposition 57. Schwarzenegger thought that he had found a way to overcome that resistance. He would say that the measure was merely a consolidation of old debt, and involved no new borrowing—despite the plain language of the state's voters' guide, which declared that the bulk of the fifteen billion dollars would replace bonds that had been approved by the legislature last year but were now under court challenge, and that four


S.S. ALL YOU CAN EAT

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billion dollars would provide the state with "additional one-time funds to address its budget shortfall." In other words, what Schwarzenegger was proposing was new borrowing—and, moreover, new borrowing to cover the loss in revenue incurred by the state when Schwarzenegger, immediately after taking the oath of office, repealed the car-tax increase that had been instituted under Governor Davis. Schwarzenegger, however, is committed to the notion that perception is reality. He had made "no new debt" the centerpiece of his campaign for the propositions. And, even when the polls were negative, he had insisted to his advisers, again and again, that "failure is not an option. Tell me what we need to do to succeed, and I'll do it." One of them said, "He's got this attitude—you create the aura, and it happens."

Now he told the crowd, "They said it cannot be done, people will be afraid of borrowing. But I educated people. It's not new borrowing! I inherited twenty-two million dollars in debt. I am doing what any financial counsellor would tell you to do. Consolidate the debt! Tear up your credit cards and throw them away!" (This was a reference to the balanced-budget amendment, Proposition 58—which, in reality, still allows some borrowing in the case of a budget shortfall.)

"This is a massive weight, alone I cannot lift it," Schwarzenegger said, repeating the line that had become his mantra. "All the people must work together. Democrats and Republicans can fix the problems, they together voted to put this on the ballot. Now you see Democrats and Republicans, together campaigning. My wife yesterday went to the Bay Area, campaigning with John Burton, the great senator. I just came from a union rally in Costa Mesa. Everyone knows we must pass this to get out of the hole." And he gave the closing lines he never tires of: "We will make it again the golden state it once was, the golden dream by the sea!" With that, he began throwing out T-shirts, as the crowd erupted in cheers. He moved across the front of the stage, leaning over to shake hands, reaching further and further into the crowd, giving thumbs-up signs to those he could not reach, until, finally, he made his way to the door of the bus, where he posed for a few moments, alone. Then he embraced other elected officials and had photographs taken with them, while some in the crowd screamed, "We love you, Arnold!"

Propositions 57 and 58 passed overwhelmingly, further aggrandizing Schwarzenegger's power and control. He turned instantly to another campaign promise, workers'-compensation reform. Workers' comp is a hot-button issue in the California business community; although workers' benefits are only average, California's premiums are the highest in the country. There was a broad consensus on the need to fix the system, but not on the remedy. Schwarzenegger's staff assembled a bill that was a compilation of reforms long sought by the California Chamber of Commerce, which would lower costs by reducing treatment options and coverage for injured workers. Now, emboldened by his fresh ballot victory, Schwarzenegger threatened legislators that if they did not give him a deal he would place the contents of his proposed bill as an initiative on the November ballot, and "the people" would vote for that, too.

"We knew we would have been really harming workers if we let the initiative go to the ballot, so instead, with one arm twisted behind our back, we engaged in a kind of negotiation with the Governor, and extracted one or two concessions," State Senator Sheila Kuehl said. She and many of her Democratic colleagues wanted some kind of rate regulation in the bill so that the savings that insurance companies achieved would be passed along to employers, in the form of reduced premiums. Last year, under Governor Davis, the legislature made several cuts in benefits for injured workers, with an estimated savings of five and a half billion dollars each year; insurance companies did not agree with that assessment of savings, and passed relatively little on to employers. But rate regulation was anathema to the Chamber of Commerce, the insurance industry, and Republican legislators. Schwarzenegger had angered many Republicans with his compromise on the spending cap, last December; now he would not yield to the Democrats. In the negotiation process, Schwarzenegger employed his familiar tactic of keeping legislators off balance. "He'd be meeting with us, saying, 'I want to work with you,'" Kuehl said. "And then he'd go from those meetings out to Costco, where he was gathering signatures for the initiative, and he'd say, 'The legislators are the problem! Sign here!'"

Unlike most of her colleagues, Kuehl, a former television actress ("The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis"), is familiar with celebrity. She witnessed at first hand the

## MR. COGITO ON A SET THEME: “FRIENDS DEPART”

I.
during his youth
Mr. Cogito
took pride
in an unusual wealth
of friends

some beyond the mountains
endowed with talents and riches
others
like the most faithful Wladyslaw
poor as a church mouse

but all of them
indeed
true friends

common tastes
ideals
similar characters

and in those
distant times
of his happy sanguine youth
Mr. Cogito
had reason to believe
that a letter with a black border
announcing his death
would touch them
to the quick

they would come
from different parts of the world
old-fashioned as in an almanac
dressed
in stiff sadness

they would go
with him
on the path
strewn with pebbles
among
cypresses
box trees
pines

and would throw onto the pile
of damp sand
a handful of flowers

II.
in the inexorable
course of years
the number of friends
melted away

they left
by twos
by groups
singly

some became pale as a wafer
lost earthly dimensions
and violently
or slowly
emigrated
into the azure

others
chose the maps
of rapid navigation
they chose safe ports
and from then on
Mr. Cogito
lost them

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way in which many people believe that something is good because a celebrity tells them it is. In his combined role of celebrity and governor, she said, “Schwarzenegger has that power in spades. And I was incredibly offended that he was touting this workers’-comp initiative at Costco, to workers who were rushing up to sign the petition because he asked them to. They had no idea what it entailed. He would say, ‘This is good! This will create jobs!’ When he should have said, ‘This is bad! This will cut your treatment when you are injured!’ It is a misuse of celebrity.”

At one point, when the deal seemed to be in danger of falling apart, Schwarzenegger—on vacation in Hawaii—mentioned to a Los Angeles *Times* reporter that he thought a part-time legislature might be a good idea for California. The last day for filing signatures to qualify the worker’s-comp initiative for the ballot was Friday, April 16th, and Schwarzenegger made that the legislators’ deadline. The legislative conference committee received the bill after 3 A.M. Thursday, April 15th, and minutes later approved the seventy-seven-page measure. Even Keith Richman, a Republican assemblyman and a staunch Schwarzenegger ally, complained that, while Schwarzenegger had promised during his campaign to end closed-door dealing in Sacramento, this extraordinarily complex piece of legislation had been achieved just that way, with no opportunity for public participation. And, while workers’ benefits were reduced, it was not clear how much employers would save, inasmuch as there was no regulation to guarantee that insurers’ savings would be passed along to employers. (Indeed, several weeks after the bill passed, some insurers stated that they could not commit to lowering premiums anytime soon. Stanley Zax, the C.E.O. of Zenith National Insurance and a major contributor to Schwarzenegger, eventually cut the rate by ten per cent, although the insurance commissioner recommended a reduction of twenty per cent.) The bill itself contained no estimate of savings. Experts agreed that whether or not this bill was any more successful than a measure passed last year, and many previous overhauls, would depend on its implementation. But Schwarzenegger declared unequivocal victory. He signed the bill at a Boeing plant in Long Beach, standing on a podium in front of a yellow U.S. Air Force C-17 transport plane and a blue backdrop that read, “Promise made. Promise kept.” As usual, the scene had been staged with care—lit to perfection, the plane angled just so, the much-deliberated choice of music (“Takin’ Care of Business”), the path of the Governor’s entry. “It will produce billions and billions of dollars in savings,” Schwarzenegger claimed. “At the same time, it will protect the workers. And we are going to say, ‘*Hasta la vista*, baby!’ to all the people who committed the fraud and the abuse of the system. . . . With this great reform, I can say to everyone, ‘California is open for business!’ ”

It was a terrific pitch, performed with

from his field of vision

Mr. Cogito
does not blame anyone for that

he understands
it must be this way
a natural turn of events

(for his part he could add
that the decline of lasting feelings
stern history
the necessity for clear choices
led to
divorces of friendship)

Mr. Cogito
does not grumble
does not complain
does not blame anyone

it became a little bit
empty

But instead more clear

**III.**
Mr. Cogito
became easily reconciled
to the departure of many friends

as if it was
a natural law
of decay

a few still remained
tested by fire and water

with those who left
forever
beyond the walls of the Kingdom of
Empiria
he maintains relations that are lively
and invariably good

they stand behind his back
observe him intently
relentless but well disposed

if they were no longer there
Mr. Cogito
would fall
into the depths
of abandonment

they form a kind of background
and from this living background
Mr. Cogito
moves forward half a step
no more than half a step

there is a term for this in religion
communion with the saints

Mr. Cogito
far from any sainthood
keeps pace
with those who are immobile

and they are like a choir

against the background of this choir
Mr. Cogito
hums
his aria
of farewell

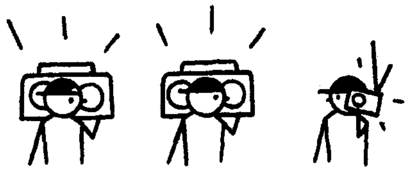
—*Zbigniew Herbert*

(*Translated, from the Polish, by John and Bogdana Carpenter.*)

the kind of delivery that makes people believe. It was also, once again, so oversimplified as to be misleading. But Schwarzenegger knows he can take license with the truth, and particularly in complex subjects like fiscal measures and workers'-compensation reform, where no critique will resonate with the public in the face of the power of his performance. Indeed, the popular perception of his success is now so strong that he seems almost invulnerable. It will not become clear for some time whether his measures have helped or harmed the state, but, like Proposition 49, what they have done for him is indisputable.

By using all the weapons at his disposal against Democratic legislators who might have opposed him on workers'-comp reform—the threat of the initiative, of a part-time legislature, of punishment in the coming elections—Schwarzenegger essentially won their surrender. ("It's a privilege to be one of the field commanders in Arnold's army," Senator Brulte, at the Boeing signing ceremony, declared.) In the weeks before the current negotiations on the state budget commenced, Schwarzenegger found a way to humble the legislators further. In order to remove especially contentious cuts from the table, he made side deals with local governments and public universities, traditional allies of the Democratic legislators. These stakeholders agreed to accept billions of dollars in budget cuts now, in return for Schwarzenegger's promise that they will be treated well in the coming years.

His deal with public-university administrators was particularly controversial. The state's Master Plan for Higher Education, adopted in 1960, established a system in which every qualified Californian could attend college—in the University of California, California State University, or community-college system. California's higher-education system, embodying both access and excellence, became the envy of the nation. For decades, the University of California prided itself on the high percentage of Nobel laureates on its faculty. (U.C. Berkeley has seven reserved parking spaces marked "NL.") But in the nineties, facing severe budget constraints, it offered early retirement to thousands of professors, including the very stars who had been aggressively recruited. California's most recent fiscal crisis had severe repercussions on higher education; since 2001, the U.C. system, for example, has had its budgets cut by five hundred million dollars, raised fees by five hundred million, and offered salaries ten per cent lower than those at other universities. Now—in the deal struck with Schwarzenegger—the U.C. and C.S.U. systems agreed to cut freshman enrollment by ten per cent and to increase fees: fourteen per cent for undergraduates and twenty per cent for graduate



students. The enrollment cut means that some qualified California students, who have earned the academic records that were supposed to grant them admission to U.C. or C.S.U., will instead be told to go to community colleges for two years, before transferring to a university. Senator Kuehl said, "We've been trying to convince the Governor to restore some of the money for the U.C. and the C.S.U. systems, by coming up with proposed cuts in other places. But because U.C. and C.S.U. are so frightened of him they have said to him, 'Let me help you cut me!' So it destroys our ability to do the least bit to save their systems. I think Schwarzenegger will go down in history as the man who eviscerated higher education in California.

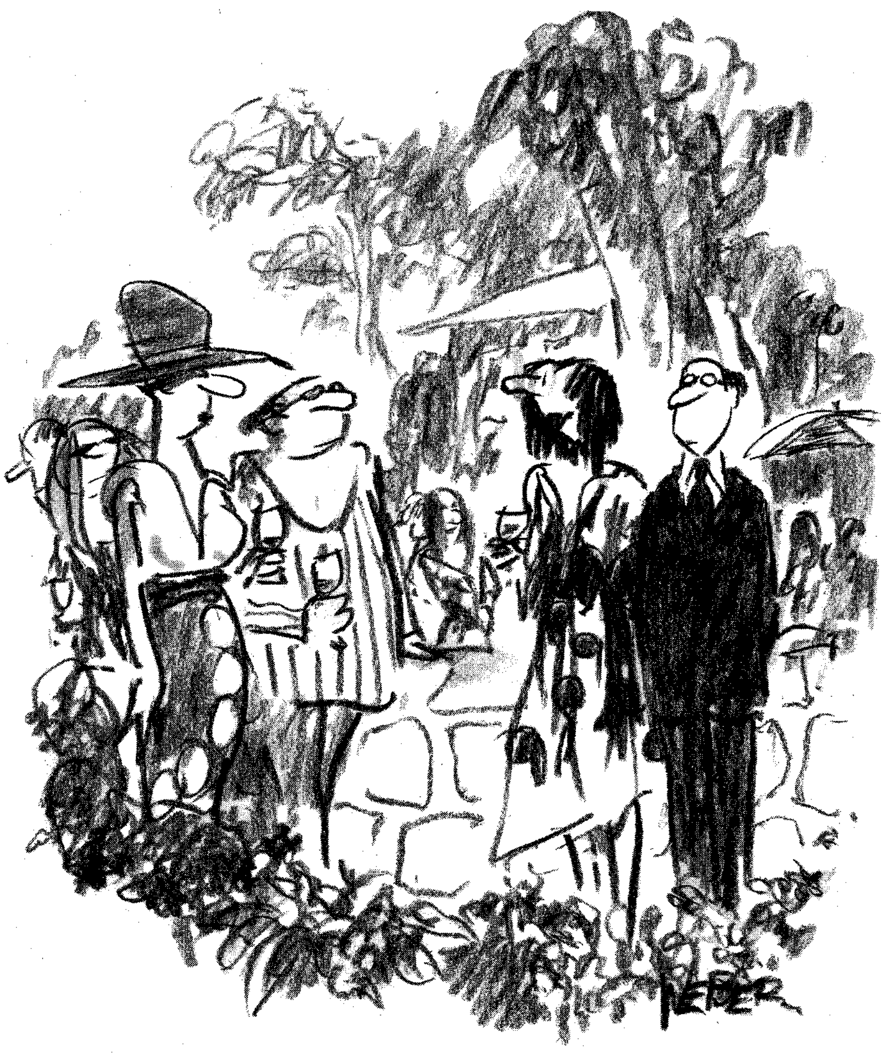
"He is trying to marginalize the legislature," Kuehl continued. "The problem in going around the legislature is that it is a deliberative body; we have rules, committee structures, and, most important, public hearings. We argue with each other. The Governor gets up in the morning, has breakfast with himself, and decides what the policy will be. It's faster, yes, but it's not transparent; there is no public input; and it often does not benefit constituencies, Republican or Democrat." The nonpartisan and highly regarded Legislative Analyst's Office seemed to agree. Pointing out that the Governor's compact made future funding commitments that are not presently required and may not even reflect future needs, the L.A.O. recommended that the legislature not endorse the deal. It said, "We believe the legislature should make decisions about funding for higher education during annual budget deliberations, where legislative priorities for all sectors of state government can be addressed and performance evaluated."

Of all the Sacramento legislators, the one who would have seemed most likely to have the inclination and the power to blunt the Schwarzenegger blitzkrieg is the Democratic Senate Leader, John Burton. An old-fashioned San Francisco liberal and a recovered cocaine addict, famous for his profanity, Burton, who was in Congress for eight years and has been in the California legislature for twenty-six, is proud of his status as the arch-defender of the powerless. "No one in this capitol building is left of me," he told me. He was deeply offended by what he saw as Governor Davis's lack of core Democratic values, and he sabotaged him at crucial moments. Many of Burton's colleagues expected him to do everything he could to subvert the new Republican governor, who had come to power in such an anomalous and, some thought, illegitimate manner. Instead, Burton was soon coöperating with Schwarzenegger, in a way he never had with Davis, and it was the state treasurer, Phil Angelides, who became known as the "anti-Schwarzenegger," for his constant critiques. Angelides, however, wants to run for governor in 2006, so his attacks are viewed as opportunistic; and also—unlike Burton—he is not in a position to block Schwarzenegger. When I interviewed Burton recently, he launched into a comparison of Schwarzenegger and Davis. "Arnold gets more into stuff than Gray did," Burton said. "He's willing to engage, to get his hands dirty, to look at all sides of the issue. He's more proactive than Gray was. And his personality is closer to mine than Gray's was.

"I spent about six months in Austria, in the military, in 1954," Burton went on. "Arnold and I were bullshitting about that the other day. I said, 'I am not working late unless we get schnitzel.' So we got it to go and Arnold had to say it was good." He paused, and added, "How bad of a Republican can you be if you're married to a Kennedy?"

Another Sacramento official commented that Burton, like so many of his colleagues, had been targeted by the Schwarzenegger "charm offensive." "Burton is powerful, supposed to be a curmudgeon, tough," the official said. "So what did Arnold do? He brought Eunice"—Eunice Kennedy Shriver—"in, they went to lunch, and Eunice and John were reminiscing about the old days in California, about Bobby Kennedy and Cesar Chavez."

One way or another, in these early months of the Schwarzenegger governorship, opponents and obstacles seem to



*"I married Norman when minimalism was all the rage."*

have folded before him. He promised just before his election that an investigation would be conducted into the charges of sexual harassment and groping that women had made; once he was governor, he scrapped it—and the mild criticism in the press quickly evaporated. After the initial stories and his election, many women are said to have approached the Los Angeles *Times* with further allegations, and the newspaper has had a team of reporters working for months on the subject. In the published stories, some women said that they had not filed complaints about him in the past because they were afraid that he would blacklist them in the entertainment industry; now attacking a powerful governor might seem threatening, too. "You don't want to get on the wrong side of Arnold—he will do anything, within the bounds of what is moral," Jon Jon Park said. "But if you're his friend he'll go to the *n*th degree, and be loyal."

Gray Davis was lambasted for his aggressive fund-raising and for taking contributions from those who had business with the state. In Schwarzenegger's campaign, he railed against special interests, and swore that he would engage in no fund-raising from the time he proposed his budget (he did so in early January) until it was passed. In the event, however, he has set a fund-raising record, easily surpassing Davis. On a single day in February, when he was in New York campaigning for Propositions 57 and 58, he raised $1.8 million—some from the very Wall Street investment bankers who would likely profit from the issuance of the bonds. "Voters cut him slack they don't cut the rest of us," Willie Brown said. "If Gray Davis had done that, he would have been drawn and quartered." Schwarzenegger also continued to raise funds from insurance companies in the weeks leading up to the negotiations on workers'-comp reform.

In March, Schwarzenegger signed on to be the executive editor of a pair of magazines, *Muscle & Fitness* and *Flex*, which in 2002 had been sold by Joe Weider to American Media, the owner of the supermarket tabloids the *National Enquirer* and the *Star*. It seemed an altogether odd thing for a governor to do. The tabloids had long shown an avid interest in Schwarzenegger; just three years ago, the *Enquirer* ran a story about Schwarzenegger's alleged seven-year affair with an actress. During the campaign, however, the tabloids were virtually free of negative stories about him. And Weider told the *News* last August that the owner of American Media, David Pecker, had assured him that the tabloids would "lay off" Schwarzenegger. Pecker denied having said this.

As provocative as Schwarzenegger's moves have been, none have tarnished his image. Californians have been enchanted by his energy and enthusiasm. Associates point out that he is a pragmatist, not an ideologue. Indeed, his "vision," one might argue, is Arnold as leader. It is as though everything else had been a mere prologue. "This is his most natural career yet," his friend Paul Wachter said. "He loves being a leader." (As Schwarzennegger said years ago, in outtakes from "Pumping Iron" that have been obtained by "Inside Edition," "There is a certain amount of people meant to be leaders, and to control, and another, large amount, ninety-five per cent, are followers.") But Republicans who envision Schwarzenegger leading a statewide Republican sweep in 2006 may well be disappointed. "He isn't focussed on doing anything for the Republican Party," George Gorton, his consultant, said. "He could care less about Republicans at these state Party conventions in their funny hats. He is not a partisan politician."

Schwarzenegger has been quietly underscoring his independence. Despite his assertion at the Republican convention about delivering California to Bush in the coming election, he has made it plain that his efforts are contingent on Bush's willingness to show generosity to California. Schwarzenegger would like to see as much as a billion dollars from Washington for costs related to illegal immigration; no further cuts to military bases in California; and a federal buyback of leases held by oil companies, which would prevent further offshore drilling, among other things. When the President came to Bakersfield for a campaign event in March, Schwarzenegger was absent. He told me that he is supporting the President, but he went on to say, "My responsibility, and the reason why people voted for me, was to fix the state, not to campaign for Bush or anything like that." Besides, he claimed, his success will help Bush. "If I can fix the state well, as well as I can, people are going to look at it and say, 'A Republican governor, you see? This is terrific.' . . . So I think that the Party—without me ever saying Republicans—it will have a positive effect, the very fact, if I do well." Meanwhile, Shriver attended a John Kerry fund-raising lunch with Teresa Heinz Kerry in February in Bel Air, and Schwarzenegger is said to have invited Kerry to California to go motorcycling with him.

Recently, with an intimate circle of friends, Schwarzenegger was talking excitedly about how the American people, in these perilous times, shadowed by the threat of terrorism at home, are increasingly going to turn away from partisan politicians. "He was happy, beaming, like a guy who struck gold," a friend who listened to him said. If bipartisanship were indeed to become the movement of the future, Schwarzenegger—with Shriver at his side—would be uniquely positioned to lead it.

When I asked Shriver about bipartisanship, and Arnold's affinity with it, she replied, "I think you will see more and more of that. I think that when people yearn now for John McCain it's a direct result of that. People come up to me all day long, every day, 'Omigod, Arnold's doing a great job—I didn't even vote for him and I feel like this is a whole new way of looking at politics.' I don't think anybody's naïve enough to think you can come together on every issue, but I think people see that there is common ground between parties on certain issues. I think most people who grow up in one party or the other or are steeped in politics, they look at the other side as the enemy. I mean, that's my experience. And Arnold has never done that. He doesn't ask people what their party is, doesn't ask them where they went to college, doesn't ask them where their parents are—he doesn't get bogged down in a résumé, so to speak. And I think that's refreshing to people.

"What's great about Arnold is that he's not closed-minded to the other side, and he mixes it all together. I have met thousands of Republican women who are pro-choice all over California—women who are fiscally conservative, running small businesses, have traditional family values, but want a woman's right to choose. I used to call certain kinds of Catholics 'cafeteria Catholics,' and I think that now you have a huge amount of cafeteria Democrats and Republicans who aren't strictly one way—they may call themselves Republicans, but they're not voting on a party line, or they're taking aspects of the party they identify with and mixing it up into their own version."

As Shriver described Schwarzenegger's appeal, she sounded like someone who has seen the future—and it is Arnold, an unstoppable phenomenon. "He's a populist," Shriver said. "He appeals to people who might not have been interested in politics, he appeals to the whole American-dream concept. His movies are that way, too." She said that she sometimes used to worry about the New York *Times* reviews of his movies, but he did not. And when the *Times* published a positive editorial about him as governor recently, she was thrilled—"but Arnold put as much stock in that as the guy at the gas station who tells him he's doing a great job. You have to remember, he didn't grow up with the New York *Times*. He hasn't been successful because of the Washington *Post*. He has been successful in all of his fields because the people supported him—so that is really who his audience is. He's frankly very real. He transcends so many different worlds. He transcends political life, to me. He's in *life*, you know? He's a figure that I think people feel a certain ownership of, connection with, more than anyone I've ever seen. When you go out with him, people come up about a hundred things. They come up about sports, about fitness, about movies, about military. Kids from high school come up, guys in their forties and fifties who grew up with 'Pumping Iron' come up, guys still trying to be in shape in their forties and fifties come up, mothers come up about their kids, people who are interested in politics come up, people who want Arnold to go back in the movies come up, 'Terminator' freaks come up, 'Predator' freaks come up, people come up about after-school programs." She paused for breath. "I can't think of anybody else like that."

Schwarzenegger's office in the capitol building is an attractive, dark-wood-panelled room, with sculptures and paintings of the American West, and, facing his desk, a large Andy Warhol portrait of Shriver; among the framed family photographs on a table is one of his father. But he prefers his tent in the capitol's inner patio, and we spoke there. Open on one side, the tent is outfitted with comfortable rattan chairs and a circular glass table; Schwarzenegger sat on the far side of the table, with his back to the tent wall, so he could see into his glass-walled office complex. He affects a kind of easy bonhomie, but he is noticeably wary, vigilant, sizing up the participants in his every moment. Up close, he looks disconcertingly unreal—almost mannequin-like, with his square head, his unlined countenance, his helmet of bronze-colored hair, and his perfectly fitted, gleaming white shirt.

It was just two days before he would offer a revised state budget, of a hundred and two billion dollars—one that would include no new taxes, spare the most severe projected budget cuts, and (as Gray Davis had done before him) push the hardest choices off for another year. A report by the Legislative Analyst's Office later concluded that Schwarzenegger's budget created a persistent deficit of more than six billion dollars into future years; that the level of borrowing, with fifteen billion dollars in bonds, is unhealthy; that the deals the Governor cut with local governments, university systems, and others would make the budget gap harder to close in the future; and that the deficit might grow even larger, because of over-optimistic projections. Comparing this budget with the Governor's January budget, the L.A.O. concluded that, while California's near-term fiscal situation had improved, the longer-term situation had worsened. And the plan "misses an important opportunity to make more meaningful inroads toward eliminating the state's long-term structural imbalance"—between its revenues and its expenditures.

Once again, the substance appeared both familiar and flawed—but that was likely to be obscured by the Schwarzenegger sales pitch. He had already defined success by setting a goal: an on-time budget. Two years ago, budget battles dragged on through the summer, until September 5th—a record for tardiness. He said that he was hoping not only for an on-time budget—that would mean June 30th—but "the earliest budget ever." Referring to the pending budget negotiations between him and the legislature, he said, "The whole kaboogie will start all over again. That's what Bob Hertzberg"—the former Democratic Speaker of the Assembly and a close Schwarzenegger ally—"calls it, 'kaboogie.' So the whole kaboogie will start all over again, which means that we could sit down and we could solve the problem in an hour, but some people can't do that," he said, with a slight, deprecating smile, "because they have to do the song and dance" of Kabuki politics.

I mentioned that some legislators object that he has so diminished the role of the legislature that he is operating an imperial governorship. He shot a knowing glance at his spokesman, Rob Stutzman, and quipped, "It's the Austrian-Californian monarchy."

A little later, Bonnie Reiss, Rob Lowe, and Peter Siggins, the California legal-affairs secretary, strolled by. "What you see here is the saviors," Schwarzenegger said. He is fond of superlatives, and often refers to his staff as "my geniuses." Lowe remarked to Schwarzenegger that years from now this tent would be part of a historic tour—people would be told that this was where Governor Schwarzenegger had conducted the business of the state. "You know what it is?" Lowe continued. "It's Arnold's big-tent politics. People talk about the big tent, and that's what he does. And then I walk out and he literally has one. I said, 'Don't you take the metaphor a little too far?' "

The three moved on, and I mentioned the subject of Shriver. She obviously brings him a great deal politically. But it is not clear whether her role is strictly supportive, or whether she affects policy to a significant degree. "Well, it's very hard to say what Maria is," Schwarzenegger said, slowly, seeming to weigh each word, "because she is literally everything. . . . I know people ask her a lot of times, what does she do, exactly? You can't say that—'What do you do, exactly?' You can't measure it, because, whatever I do, she's a part of it."

Schwarzenegger was distracted by the sight of Senator Burton, in the office of Pat Clarey, the chief of staff. Burton, who was carrying a bag of cherries, was mak-

*"Just wait until my autobiographical one-woman show."*

ing signs to Schwarzenegger, pointing at his watch. "He's bringing probably cherries," Schwarzenegger said. "Look at him, every day he's coming down with flowers or something." The watch gesture was just a joke, Schwarzenegger told me—their meeting was an hour away. "But he's always cruising in my offices."

Schwarzenegger resumed counting the ways in which Shriver has been valuable to him. In 1980, when he was secretly training for the Mr. Olympia competition, she had understood what he had to do to win, and she banished sweets from his house. She had a familiarity with the entertainment business, because Joseph P. Kennedy, her grandfather, had owned a film company for a time. She has been steeped in politics. And as a journalist she can advise him; for example, he said, "If she wants to go and track me down and do me in, what would she do?" Despite the fact that he and Shriver belong to different parties, he continued, there is "never a dispute. Never, never. Because she would just say, you know, that it's too bad with education, that right now there's such a crunch. . . . But she would never say, 'No, I think that we should just put money, even if you have to raise the tax you have.' None of that."

(In a subsequent interview with Shriver, when I told her that her husband had said they never have disputes, and she would never suggest raising taxes, she laughed hard. "My brother says, 'You could ask Arnold how the skiing is, and he could be standing on a mountain, and it's all rock and the snow is melted and he'd say, "It's fantastic! Come on up right away!" ' " Then she continued, "I think the great thing for me, let's just say, is that Arnold has always asked my point of view and I give him my point of view—and I think sometimes it disagrees with his point of view, and sometimes he does what he wants to do. Sometimes one has an impact, maybe not immediately but later.")

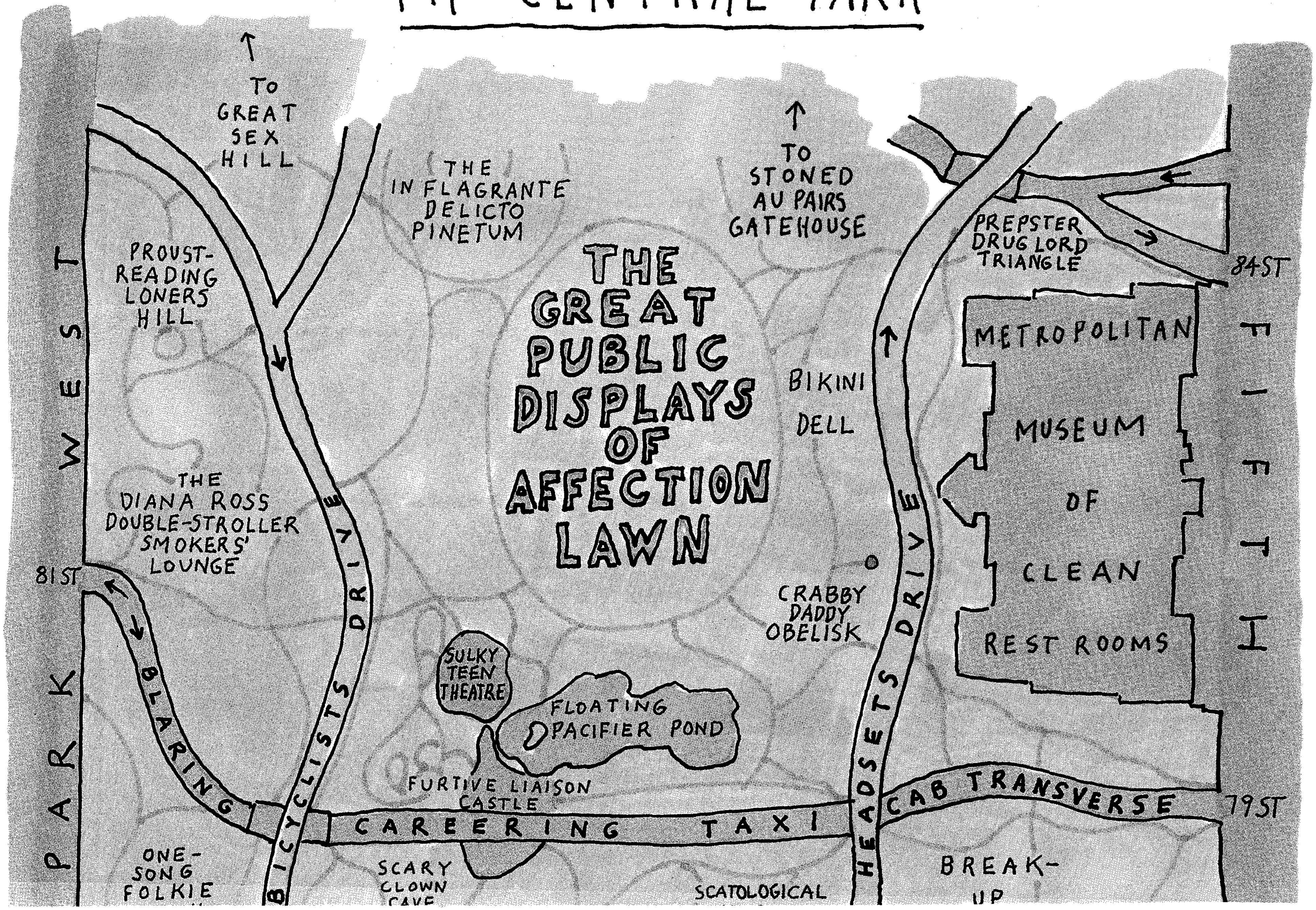
Schwarzenegger wants to make it plain that, however unconventional his résumé may be, it is not a drawback. On the contrary. "I say it many times here," he told me. "My background was much more valuable than the background of working your way up through the halls of Sacramento." In bodybuilding, after all, "you get to know the real you . . . the real you that is identified in the gym, when it comes to that last rep and everyone else faints, and everyone else falls apart, and everyone else maybe screams in pain—can you do that extra rep, which we call the forced rep? Do you have that in you, to be able to fight through that?" He even tends to see the state through the prism of bodybuilding. "In bodybuilding, you can have the best deltoids, the greatest chest, the most spectacular back and abs, but if you have no calves you lose. And so this is the same here with the running of the state. You can have all the great pieces, but if people are suffering, because they don't have jobs, you have nothing. You cannot really feel proud of the rest of what you have accomplished."

Perhaps most significant, though, was what he had learned as an actor. "In acting, what is important is that it's organic, whatever you do, and that you connect to the people so they can look at the scene and buy in. But it's the same here. You have to connect with the people, and the more organic you are—the more you reach down and the way you really feel about people, and to really feel what you feel, your passion for certain things and all this—that's what then makes people buy in. . . . It starts with the legislators, it starts with the team that works with you. And also then it goes out to the public, and to the business community, for instance, or the leaders and everyone. . . . So, you know, that is really what it's about, is to be able to communicate, and that's why the greatest Presidents, as you can see, were Kennedy and Reagan, because they were incredible, and the latest was, of course, Clinton. They were all great communicators. And it's important to be organic, to have it really come from your heart rather than being fake."

As Schwarzenegger spoke about Kennedy, Reagan, and Clinton, it sounded like a pantheon that he was positioning himself to join. And surely this would be the ultimate instance of achieving that which people thought could not be done—something, even, that was prohibited by the Constitution. Hadn't those lines about the constitutional amendment in his recent speeches, like virtually everything in his remarkable life, been strategic?

No, Schwarzenegger replied. It was merely a joke. He looked at me sharply. "I mean, believe me," he said. "It's the last thing I think about, is that." ♦

# MY CENTRAL PARK



TO GREAT SEX HILL
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FIFTH
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CRABBY DADDY OBELISK
THE DIANA ROSS DOUBLE-STROLLER SMOKERS' LOUNGE
81 ST
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SULKY TEEN THEATRE
FLOATING PACIFIER POND
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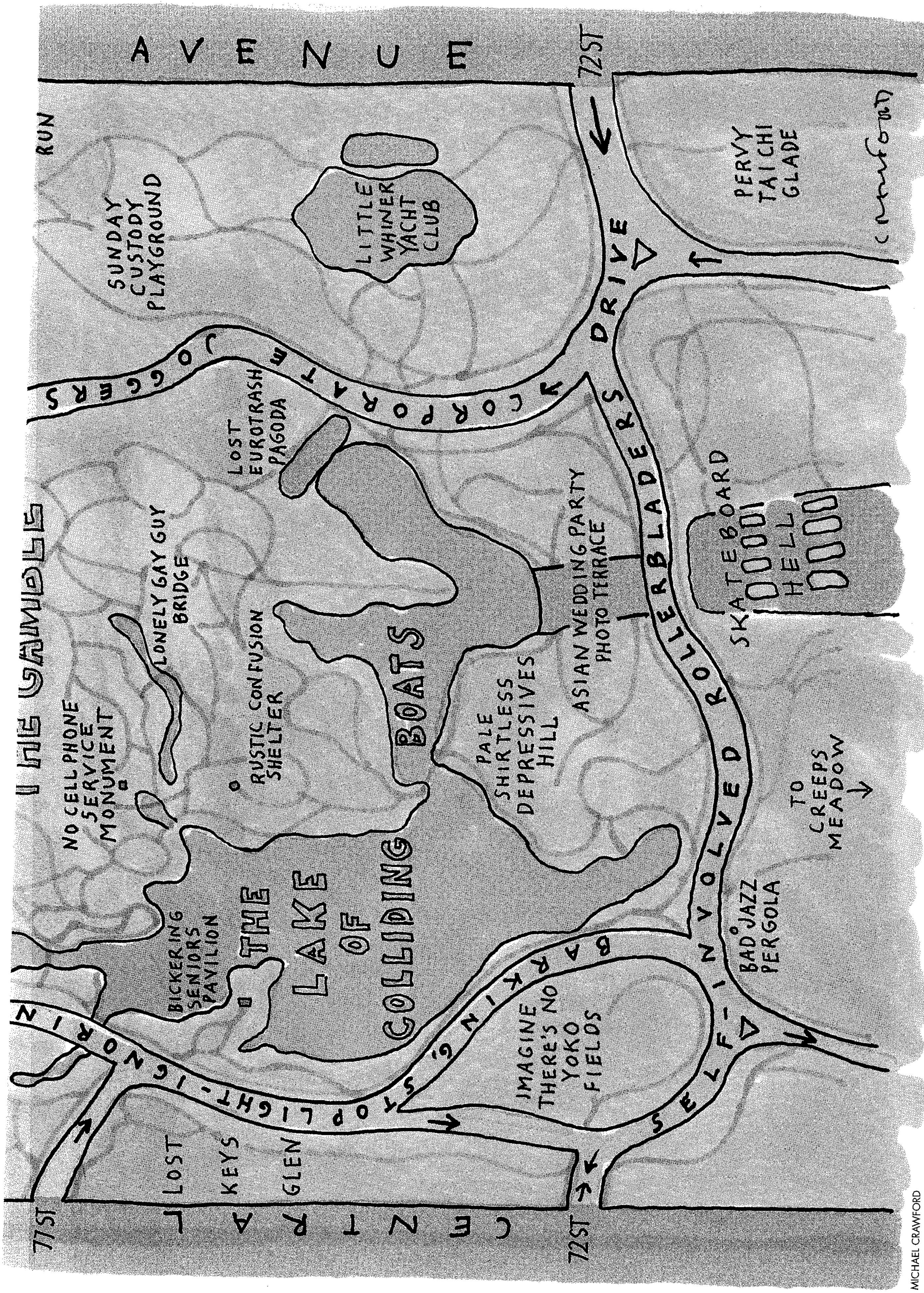
CAREERING TAXI
CAB TRANSVERSE
79 ST
ONE-SONG FOLKIE
SCARY CLOWN CAVE
SCATOLOGICAL
BREAK-UP


AVENUE
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PERVY TAI CHI GLADE
crawford
JOGGERS
CORPORATE
DRIVE
ROLLERBLADERS
LOST EUROTRASH PAGODA
THE GAMBLE
LONELY GAY GUY BRIDGE
ASIAN WEDDING PARTY PHOTO TERRACE
SKATEBOARD HELL
RUSTIC CONFUSION SHELTER
NO CELL PHONE SERVICE MONUMENT
BOATS
PALE SHIRTLESS DEPRESSIVES HILL
SELF-INVOLVED
TO CREEPS MEADOW
THE LAKE OF COLLIDING
BICKERING SENIORS PAVILION
BAD JAZZ PERGOLA
BARKING
IMAGINE THERE'S NO YOKO FIELDS
STOPLIGHT-IGNORIN
LOST KEYS GLEN
77ST
72ST
CENTRAL

MICHAEL CRAWFORD

FICTION

# THE PLAGUE OF DOVES

### BY LOUISE ERDRICH

Some years before the turn of the last century, my great-uncle, one of the first Catholic priests of aboriginal blood, put the call out to his congregation, telling everyone to gather at St. Gabriel's, wearing scapulars and holding missals. From that place, they would proceed to walk the fields in a long, sweeping row, and with each step loudly pray away the doves. My great-uncle's human flock had taken up the plow and farmed among Norwegian settlers. Unlike the French, who mingled with my ancestors, the Norwegians took little interest in the women native to the land and did not intermarry. In fact, they disregarded everybody but themselves and were quite clannish. But the doves ate their crops just the same. They ate the wheat seedlings and the rye and started on the corn. They ate the sprouts of new flowers and the buds of apples and the tough leaves of oak trees and even last year's chaff. The doves were plump, and delicious smoked, but one could wring the necks of hundreds or even thousands and effect no visible diminishment of their number. The pole-and-mud houses of the mixed-bloods and the skin tents of the blanket Indians were crushed by the weight of the birds. When they descended, both Indians and whites set up great bonfires and tried to drive them into nets. The birds were burned, roasted, baked in pies, stewed, salted down in barrels, or clubbed to death with sticks and left to rot. But the dead only fed the living, and each morning when the people woke it was to the scraping and beating of wings, the murmurous susurration, the awful cooing babble, and the sight of the curious and gentle faces of those creatures.

My great-uncle had hastily constructed crisscrossed racks of sticks to protect the rare glass windows of what was grandly called the rectory. In a corner of that one-room cabin, his twelve-year-old brother, whom he had saved from a life of excessive freedom, slept on a pallet of cottonwood branches and a mattress stuffed with grass. This was the softest bed the boy had ever had, and he did not want to leave it, but my great-uncle thrust a choirboy surplice at him and ordered him to polish up the candelabra that he would carry in the procession.

This boy would be my grandfather's father, my Mooshum, and since he lived to be over a hundred I was able to hear him tell and retell the story of the most momentous day of his life—which began with this attempt to vanquish the plague of doves. Sitting on a hard chair, between our first television and the small alcove of bookshelves set into the wall of our government-owned house on the Bureau of Indian Affairs school campus, he told us how he'd heard the scratching of the doves' feet as they climbed all over the screens of sticks that his brother had made. He dreaded going to the outhouse, because some of the birds had got mired in the filth beneath the hole and set up a screeching clamor of despair that caused others of their kind to throw themselves against the hut in rescue attempts. But he did not dare relieve himself anywhere else. So through a flurry of wings, shuffling so as not to step on the birds, he made his way to the outhouse and completed the necessary actions with his eyes shut. Leaving, he tied the door closed so that no other doves would be trapped.

The outhouse drama, always the first scene in Mooshum's story of that momentous day, was filled with the sort of details that my brother and I found interesting; the outhouse—which was an exotic but not unfamiliar feature—and the horror of the birds' death by excrement gripped our attention. Mooshum was our second-favorite indoor entertainment. Television was the first. But our father had removed the television's knobs and hidden them. Despite constant efforts, we couldn't find the knobs, and we came to believe that he carried them on his person at all times. So instead we listened to our Mooshum. While he talked, we sat on kitchen chairs and twisted our hair. Our mother had given him a red Folgers coffee can for spitting snoose. He wore soft, worn green Sears work clothes, a pair of battered brown lace-up boots, and a twill cap, even in the house. His eyes shone from slits cut deep into his face. He was hunched and dried-out, with random wisps of white hair falling over his ears and neck. From time to time, as he spoke, we glimpsed the murky scraggle of his teeth. Still, such was his conviction in the telling of this story that it wasn't hard at all to imagine him at twelve.

My great-uncle put on his vestments, hand-me-downs from a Minneapolis parish. Since real incense was impossible to obtain, he stuffed the censer with dry sage rolled up in balls. Then he wet a comb at the cabin's iron hand pump and slicked back his hair and his little brother's hair. The church cabin was just across the yard, and wagons had been pulling up for the past hour or so, each with a dog or two tied in the box to keep the birds and their droppings off the piled hay where people would sit. The constant movement of the birds made some of the horses skittish. Many wore blinders and had bouquets of calming chamomile tied to their harnesses. As our Mooshum walked across the yard, he saw that the roof of the church was covered with birds that repeatedly—in play, it seemed—flew up and knocked one another off the holy cross that marked the cabin as a church. Great-Uncle was more than six feet tall, an imposing man, whose melodious voice carried over the confusion of sounds as he organized his parishioners into a line. The two brothers stood at the center, and with the faithful congregants spread out on either side they made their way slowly down the hill toward the first of the fields they hoped to clear.

The sun was dull that day, thickly clouded over, and the air was oppressively still, so that pungent clouds of sage smoke hung all around the metal basket on its chain as it swung in each direction. In the first field, the doves were packed so tightly on the ground that there was a sudden agitation among the women, who could not move forward without sweeping the birds into their skirts. In panic, the birds tangled themselves in the cloth. The line halted suddenly as the women erupted in a raging dance, each twirling, stamping, beating, and flapping her skirts. So vehement was the dance that the birds all around them popped into flight, frightening other birds, and within moments the entire field was a storm of birds that roared and blasted down upon the people, who nonetheless stood firm with splayed missals on their heads. To move forward, the women forsook their modesty. They knotted their skirts up around their thighs, held out their rosaries or scapulars, and chanted the Hail Mary into the wind of beating wings. Mooshum, who had rarely seen a woman's lower limbs, dropped behind, delighted. As he watched the women's naked round brown legs thrash through the field, he lowered the candelabra that his brother had given him to protect his face. Instantly, he was struck on the forehead by a bird that hurtled from the sky

AURA ROSENBERG, "MATT MULLICAN/LU & MO" (1998)

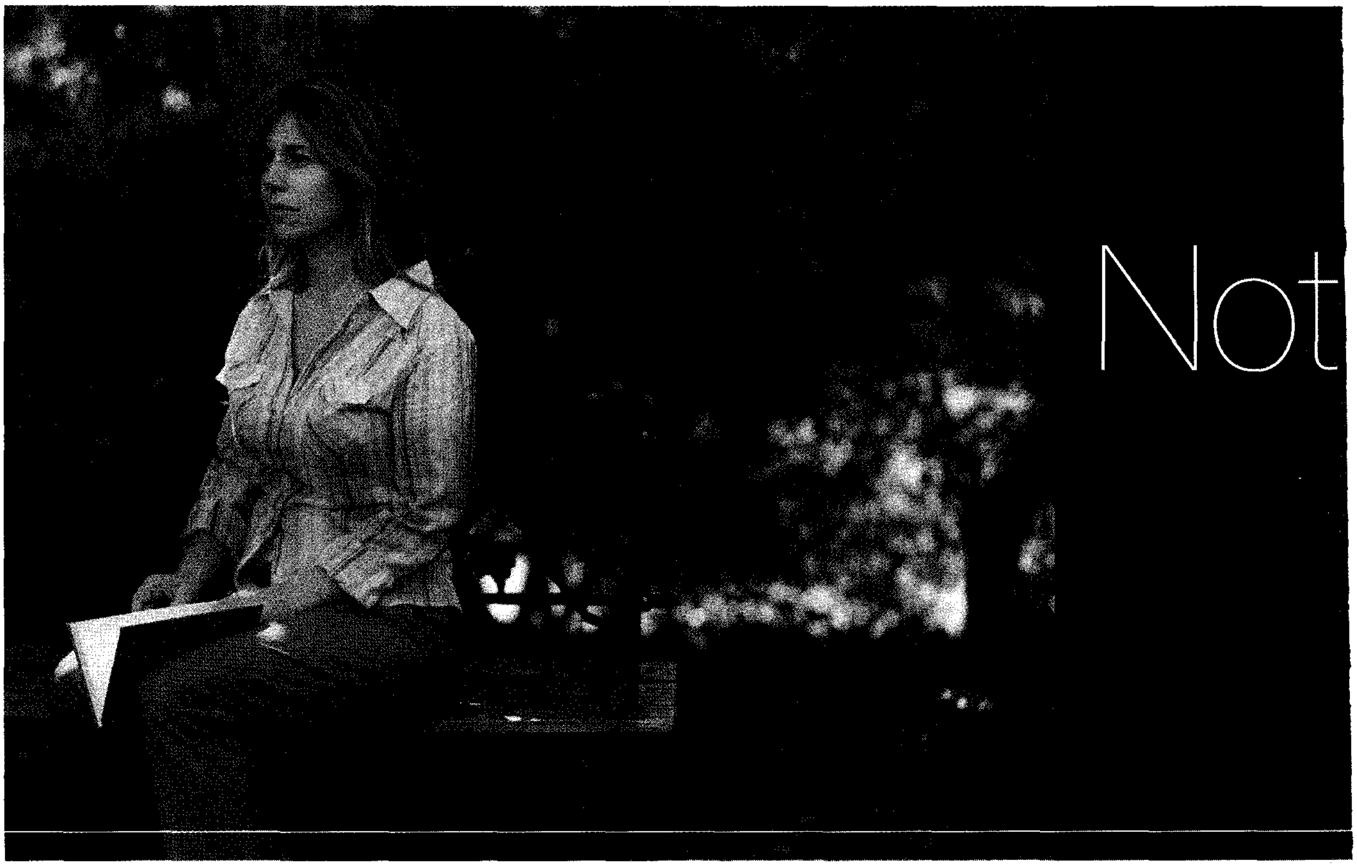
with such force that it seemed to have been flung directly by God, to smite and blind him before he carried his sin of appreciation any further.

At this point in the story, Mooshum often became so agitated that he acted out the smiting and, to our pleasure, mimed his collapse, throwing himself upon the floor. Then he opened his eyes and lifted his head and stared into space, clearly seeing, even now, the vision of the Holy Spirit, which appeared to him not in the form of a white bird among the brown doves but as the earthly body of a girl.

Our family has something of a historical reputation for romantic encounters. My aunt Philomena, struck by the smile of a man on a passenger train, raised her hand from the ditch where she stood picking berries, and was unable to see his hand wave in return. But something made her stay there until nightfall and then camp there overnight, and wait quietly for another whole day until the man came walking back to her from the next stop, sixty miles ahead. My oldest cousin, Curtis, dated the Haskell Indian Princess, who cut her braids off and gave them to him the night she died of tuberculosis. He remained a bachelor, in her memory, until his fifties. My aunt Agathe left the convent for a priest. My cousin Eugene reformed a small-town stripper. Even my sedate-looking father was swept through the Second World War by one promising glance from my mother. And so on.

These tales of extravagant encounter contrasted with the modesty of the subsequent marriages and occupations of my relatives. We are a tribe of office workers, bank tellers, booksellers, and bureaucrats. The wildest of us (Eugene) owns a restaurant, and the most heroic of us (my father) teaches seventh grade. Yet this current of drama holds together the generations, I think, and my brother and I listened to Mooshum not only to find out what had happened but also because we hoped for instructions on how to behave when our own moment of recognition, or romantic trial, should arrive.

In truth, I thought that mine had probably already come, for even as I sat there listening to Mooshum my fingers obsessively spelled out the name of my beloved on my arm or in my hand or on my knee. I believed that if I wrote his name on my body a million times he would kiss me. I knew that he loved me, and he was safe in the knowledge that I loved him, but we attended a Roman Catholic grade school in the early nineteen-sixties, when boys and girls who were known to be in love hardly talked to each other and certainly never touched. We played softball and kickball together, and acted and spoke through other children who were eager to deliver messages. I had copied a series of these secondhand love statements into my tiny leopard-print diary, which had a golden lock. The key was hidden in the hollow knob of my bedstead. Also, I had written the name of my beloved, in blood from a scratched mosquito bite, along the inner



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wall of my closet. His name held for me the sacred resonance of those Old Testament words written in fire by an invisible hand. *Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin.* I could not say his name aloud. I could only write it with my fingers on my skin, until my mother feared I'd got lice and coated my hair with mayonnaise, covered my head with a shower cap, and told me to sit in a bath that was as hot as I could stand until my condition should satisfy her.

I locked the bathroom door, controlled the hot water with my toe, and, since I had nothing else to do, decided to advance my name-writing total by several thousand. As I wrote, I found places on myself that changed and warmed in response to the repetition of those letters, and without an idea in the world what I was doing I gave myself successive alphabetical orgasms so shocking in their intensity and delicacy that the mayonnaise must have melted off my head. I then stopped writing on myself. I believed that I had reached the million mark, and didn't dare try the same thing again.

Ash Wednesday passed, and I was reminded that I was made of dust only and would return to dust as soon as life was done with me. My body, inscribed everywhere with the holy name Merlin Koppin (I can say it now), was only a temporary surface, soon to crumble like a leaf. As always, we entered the Lenten season aware that our hunger for sweets or salted pretzels or whatever we had given up was only a phantom craving. The hunger of the spirit alone was real. It was my good fortune not to understand that writing my boyfriend's name on myself had been an impure act, so I felt that I had nothing worse to atone for than my collaboration with my brother's discovery that pliers from the toolbox worked as well as knobs on the television. As soon as my parents were gone, we could watch "The Three Stooges"—our and Mooshum's favorite, and a show that my parents thought abominable. It was Palm Sunday before my father happened to come home from an errand and rest his hand on the hot surface of the television and then fix us with the foxlike suspicion that his students surely dreaded. He got the truth out of us quickly. The pliers were hidden, along with the knobs, and Mooshum's story resumed.

The girl who would become my great-grandmother had fallen behind the other women in the field, because she was too shy to knot up her skirts. Her name was Junesse, and she, too, was twelve years old. The trick, she found, was to walk very slowly so that the birds had time to move politely aside instead of starting upward. Junesse wore a long white Communion dress made of layers of filmy muslin. She had insisted on wearing this dress, and the aunt who cared for her had given in but had promised to beat her if she returned with a rip or a stain. This threat, too, had deterred Junesse from joining in the other women's wild dance. But now, finding herself alone with the felled candelabra-bearer, she perhaps forced their fate in the world

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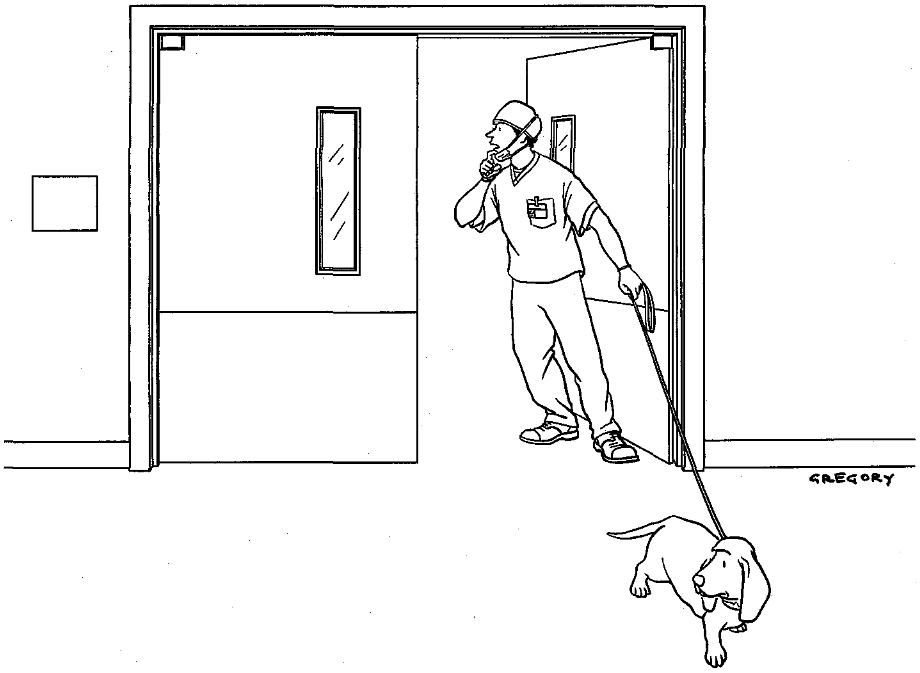
by kneeling in a patch of bird slime to revive him, and then sealed it by using her sash to blot away the wash of blood from his forehead, where the bird had wounded him.

And there she was! Mooshum paused in his story. His hands opened and the hundreds of wrinkles in his face folded into a mask of unsurpassable happiness. Her black hair was tied with a white ribbon. Her white dress had a bodice embroidered with white flower petals and white leaves. And she had the pale, heavy skin and slanting black eyes of the Métis women in whose honor a bishop of that diocese had written a warning to his priests, advising them to pray hard and to remember that although women's forms could be inordinately fair, they were also savage and permeable. The Devil came and went in them at will. Of course, Junesse Malaterre was innocent, but she was also sharp of mind. Her last name, which came down to us from some French *voyageur*, refers to the cleft furrows of godless rock, the barren valleys, striped outcrops, and mazelike configurations of rose, gray, tan, and purple stone that characterize the Badlands of North Dakota. To this place Mooshum and Junesse eventually made their way.

"We seen into each udder's dept'" was how my Mooshum put it, in his gentle reservation accent. There was always a moment of silence among the three of us as the scene played out. Mooshum saw what he described. I don't know what my brother saw—perhaps another boy. (He eventually came out to everyone at my parents' silver-anniversary dinner party.) Or perhaps he saw that, after a whirl of experience and a minor car accident, he, too, would settle into the dull happiness of routine with his insurance-claims adjuster. As for me, I saw two beings—the boy shaken, frowning, the girl in white kneeling over him pressing the sash of her dress to the wound on his head, stanching the flow of blood. Most important, I saw their dark, mutual gaze. The Holy Spirit hovered between them. Her sash reddened. His blood defied gravity and flowed up her arm. Then her mouth opened. Did they kiss? I couldn't ask Mooshum. She hadn't had time to write his name on her body even once, and, besides, she didn't know his name. They had seen into each other's being, therefore names were irrelevant. They ran away together, Mooshum said, before either had thought to ask what the other was called. And then they decided not to have names for a while—all that mattered was that they had escaped, slipped their knots, cut the harnesses that their relatives had tightened. Junesse fled her aunt's beating and the endless drudgery of caring for six younger cousins, who would all die the following winter of a choking cough. Mooshum fled the sanctified future that his brother had picked out for him.

The two children in white clothes melted into the wall of birds. Their robes soon became as dark as the soil, and so they blended into the earth as they made their way along the edges of fields, through open country, to where the farmable land stopped and the ground split open and the beautifully abraded knobs and canyons of the Badlands began. Although it took them several years to physically consummate their feelings (Mooshum hinted at this but never came right out and said it), they were in love. And they were survivors. They knew how to make a fire from scratch, and for the first few days they were able to live on the roasted meat of doves. It was too early in the year for there to be much else to gather in the way of food, but they stole birds' eggs and dug up weeds. They snared rabbits, and begged what they could from isolated homesteads.



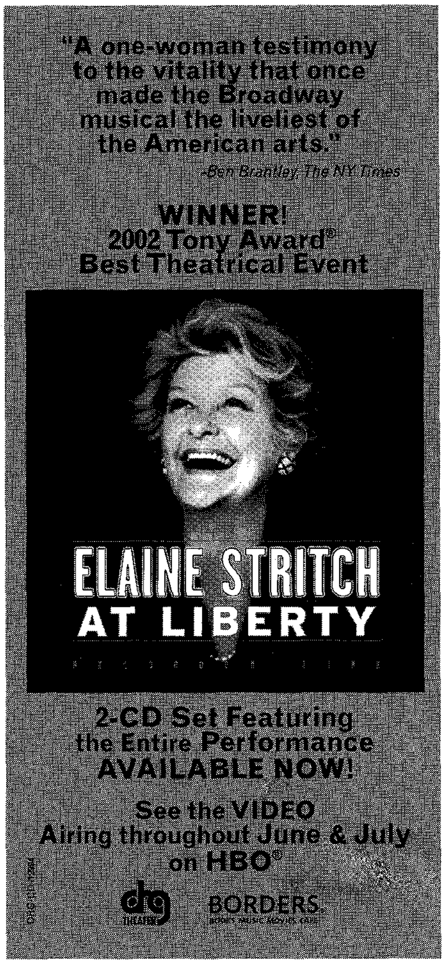
*"Let's go, Barney—I guess* *some* *people just don't like dogs."*

On the Monday that we braided our blessed palms in school, braces were put on my teeth. Unlike now, when every other child undergoes some sort of orthodonture, braces were rare then. It is really extraordinary that my parents, in such modest circumstances, decided to correct my teeth at all. Our dentist was old-fashioned, and believed that to protect the enamel of my front teeth from the wires he should cap them in gold. So one day I appeared in school with two long, resplendent front teeth and a mouth full of hardware. It hadn't occurred to me that I'd be teased, but then somebody whispered, "Easter Bunny!" By noon recess, boys swirled around me, poking, trying to get me to smile. Suddenly, as if a great wind had blown everyone else off the bare gravel yard, there was Merlin Koppin. He shoved me and laughed right in my face. Then the other boys swept him away. I took refuge in the only sheltered spot on the playground, an alcove in the brick on the southern side facing the littered hulks of cars behind a gas station. I stood in a silent bubble, rubbing my collarbone where his hands had pushed, wondering. What had happened to our love? It was in danger, maybe finished. Because of golden teeth. Even then, such a radical change in feeling seemed impossible to bear. Remembering our family history, though, I rallied myself to the challenge. Included in the romantic tales were episodes of reversals. I had justice on my side, and, besides, when my braces came off I would be beautiful. Of this I had been assured by my parents. So as we were entering the classroom in our usual parallel lines, me in the girls' line, he in the boys', I maneuvered myself across from Merlin, punched him in the arm, hard, and said, "Love me or leave me." Then I marched away. My knees were weak, my heart pounded. My act had been wild and unprecedented. Soon everyone had heard about it, and I was famous, even among the eighth-grade girls, one of whom, Tenny McElwayne, offered to beat Merlin up for me. Power was mine, and it was Holy Week.

The statues were shrouded in purple except for our church's exceptionally graphic Stations of the Cross. Nowadays, the Stations of the Cross are carved in tasteful wood or otherwise abstracted. But our church's version was molded of plaster and painted with bloody relish. Eyes rolled to the whites. Mouths contorted. Limbs flailed. It was all there. The side aisles of the church were wide, and there was plenty of room for schoolchildren to kneel on the aggregate stone floor and contemplate the hard truths of torture. The most sensitive of the girls, and one boy, destined not for the priesthood but for a spectacular musical career, wept openly and luxuriantly. The rest of us, soaked in guilt or secretly admiring the gore, tried to sit back unobtrusively on our bottoms and spare our kneecaps. At some point, we were allowed into the pews, where, during the three holiest hours of the afternoon on Good Friday, with Christ slowly dying underneath his purple cape, we were supposed to maintain silence. During that time, I decided to begin erasing Merlin's name from my body by writing it backward a million times: Nippok Nilrem. I began my task in the palm of my hand, then moved to my knee. I'd managed only a hundred when I was thrilled to realize that Merlin was trying frantically to catch my eye, a thing that had never happened before. As I've said, our love affair had been carried out by intermediaries. But my fierce punch seemed to have hot-wired his emotions. That he should be so impetuous, so desperate, as to seek me out directly! I was overcome with a wash of shyness and terror. I wanted to acknowledge Merlin, but I couldn't now. I stayed frozen in place until we were dismissed.

Easter Sunday. I am dressed in blue dotted nylon swiss. The seams prickle and the neck itches, but the over-all effect, I think, is glorious. I own a hat that has fake lilies of the valley on it and a stretchy band that digs into my chin. At the last moment, I beg to wear my mother's lace mantilla instead, the one like Jackie Kennedy's, headgear that only the most fashionable older girls wear. Nevertheless, I am completely unprepared for what happens when I return from taking Holy Communion. I am kneeling at the end of the pew. We are instructed to remain silent and to allow Christ's presence to diffuse in us. I do my best. But then I see Merlin in the line for Communion on my side of the church, which means that on the way back to his seat he will pass only inches from me. I can keep my head demurely down, or I can look up. The choice dizzies me. And I do look up. He rounds the first pew. I hold my gaze steady. He sees that I am looking at him—freckles, dark slicked-back hair, narrow brown eyes—and he does not look away. With the Host of the Resurrection in his mouth, my first love gives me a glare of anguished passion that suddenly ignites the million invisible names.

For one whole summer, my great-grandparents lived off a bag of contraband pinto beans. They killed the rattlesnakes that came down to the streambed to hunt, roasted them, used salt from a little mineral wash to season the meat. They managed to find some berry bushes and to snare a few gophers and rabbits. But the taste of freedom was eclipsed now by their longing for a good, hot dinner. Though desolate, the Badlands were far from empty; they were peopled in Mooshum's time by unpurposed miscreants and outlaws as well as by honest ranchers. One day, Mooshum and Junesse heard an inhuman shrieking from some bushes deep in a draw where they'd set snares. Upon cautiously investigating, they found that they had snared a pig by its hind leg. While they were debating how to kill it, there appeared on a rise the silhouette of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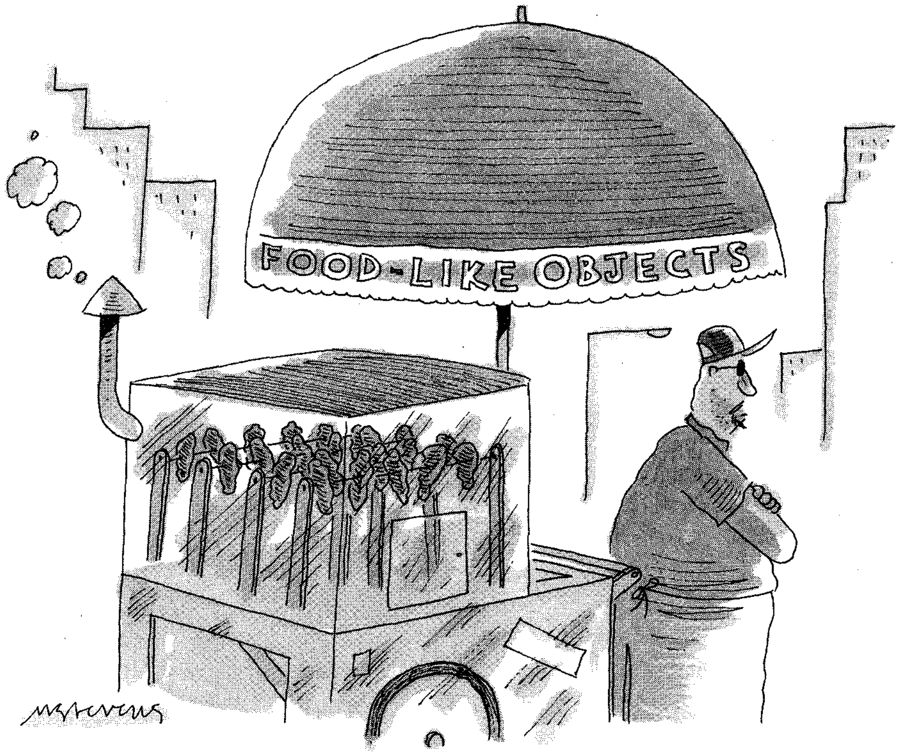

an immense person wearing a wide fedora and seated on a horse. They could have run, but as the rider approached them they were too amazed to move, or didn't want to, for the light now caught the features of a giant woman dressed in the clothing of a man. Her eyes were small and shrewd, her nose and cheeks pudgy, her lip a narrow curl of flesh. One long braid hung down beside a large and motherly breast. She wore twill trousers, boots, chaps, leather gauntlets, and a cowhide belt with silver conchas. Her wide-brimmed hat was banded with the skin of a snake. Her brown bloodstock horse stopped short, polite and obedient. The woman spat a stream of tobacco juice at a quiet lizard, laughed when it jumped and skittered, then ordered the two children to stand still while she roped her hog. With swift and expert motions, she dismounted and tied the pig to the pommel of her saddle, then released its hind leg.

"Climb on," she commanded, gesturing at the horse, and when the children did she grasped the halter and started walking. The roped pig trotted along behind. By the time they reached the woman's ranch, which was miles off, the two had fallen asleep. The woman had a ranch hand take them down, still sleeping, and lay them in a bedroom in her house, which was large and ramshackle, partly sod and partly framed. There were two little beds in the room, plus a trundle where she herself sometimes slept, snoring like an engine, when she was angry with her husband, the notorious Ott Black. In this place my Mooshum and his bride-to-be would live until they turned sixteen.

In Erling Nicolai Rolfsrud's compendium of memorable women and men from North Dakota, "Mustache" Maude Black is described as not unwomanly, though she smoked, drank, was a crack shot and a hard-assed camp boss. These things, my Mooshum said, were all true, as was the mention of both her kind ways and her habit of casual rustling. The last was just a sport to her, Mooshum said; she never meant any harm by it. Mustache Maude sometimes had a mustache, and sometimes, when she plucked it out, she didn't. She kept a neat henhouse and a tidy kitchen. She grew very fond of Mooshum and Junesse, taught them to rope, ride, shoot, and make an unbeatable chicken-and-dumpling stew. Divining their love, she quickly banished Mooshum to the men's bunkhouse, where he soon learned the many ways in which he could make children in the future with Junesse. He practiced in his mind, and could hardly wait. But Maude forbade their marriage until both were sixteen. When that day came, she threw a wedding supper that was talked about for years, featuring several delectably roasted animals that seemed to be the same size and type as those which had gone missing from the farms of the dinner guests. This caused a stir, but Maude kept the liquor flowing, and most of the ranchers shrugged it off.

What was not shrugged off, what was truly resented, was the fact that Maude had thrown an elaborate shindig for a couple of Indians. Or half-breeds. It didn't matter which. These were uncertain times in North Dakota. People's nerves were still shot over what had happened to Custer, and every few years there occurred a lynching. Just a few years before, the remains of five men had been found, still strung from trees, supposedly the victims of a vigilante party led by Flopping Bill Cantrell. Some time later, an entire family was murdered and three Indians were caught by a mob and hanged for maybe doing it, including a boy named Paul Holy Track, who was only thirteen.

The foul murder of a woman on a farm just to the west of Maude's place caused the neighbors to disregard, in their need for immediate revenge, the sudden absence of that woman's husband and to turn their thoughts to the nearest available Indian. There I was, Mooshum said. One night, the yard of pounded dirt between the bunkhouse and Maude's sleeping quarters filled with men hoisting torches of flaring pitch. Their howls rousted Maude from her bed. As a precaution, she had sent Mooshum down to her kitchen cellar to sleep the night. So he knew what happened only through the memory of his wife, for he heard nothing and dreamed his way through the danger.

"Send him out to us," they bawled, "or we will take him ourselves."

Maude stood in the doorway in her nightgown, her holster belted on, a cocked pistol in either hand. She never liked to be woken from sleep.

"I'll shoot the first two of youse that climbs down off his horse," she said, then gestured to the sleepy man beside her, "and Ott Black will plug the next!"

The men were very drunk and could hardly control their horses. One fell off, and Maude shot him in the leg. He started screaming worse than the snared pig.

"Which one of you boys is next?" Maude roared.

"Send out the goddam Indian!" they called. But the yell had less conviction, punctuated, as it was, by the shot man's hoarse shrieks.

"What Indian?"

"That boy!"

"He ain't no Indian," Maude said. "He's a Jew from the land of Galilee! One of the lost tribe of Israel!"

Ott Black nearly choked at his wife's wit.

The men laughed nervously, and called for the boy again.

"I was just having fun with you," Maude said. "Fact is, he's Ott Black's trueborn son."

This threw the men back in their saddles. Ott blinked, then caught on and bellowed, "You men never knowed a woman till you knowed Maude Black!"

The men fell back into the night and left their fallen would-be lyncher kicking in the dirt and pleading to God for mercy. Maybe Maude's bullet had hit a nerve or a bone, for the man seemed to be in an unusual amount of pain for just a gunshot wound to the leg. He began to rave and foam at the mouth, so Maude tied him to his saddle and set out for the doctor's. He died on the way from loss of blood. Before dawn, Maude came back, gave my great-grandparents her two best horses, and told them to ride hard back the way they had come. Which was how they ended up on their home reservation in time to receive their allotments, where they farmed using government-issue seed and plows and reared their six children, one of whom was my grandfather, and where my parents took us every summer just after the wood ticks had settled down.

The story may have been true, for, as I have said, there really was a Mustache Maude Black who had a husband named Ott. Only the story changed. Sometimes Maude was the one to claim Mooshum as her son in the story and sometimes she went on to claim that she'd had an affair with Chief Gall. And sometimes she plugged the man in the gut. But if there was embellishment it had to do only with facts. St. Gabriel's Church was named for God's messenger, the archangel who currently serves as the patron saint of telecommunications workers. Those doves were surely the passenger pigeons of legend and truth, whose numbers were such that nobody thought they could ever be wiped from the earth.

As Mooshum grew frailer and had trouble getting out of his chair, our parents relaxed their television boycott. More often now, our father fixed the magic circles of plastic onto their metal posts and twiddled them until the picture cleared. We sometimes all watched "The Three Stooges" together. The black-haired one looked a lot like the woman who had saved his life, Mooshum said, nodding and pointing at the set. I remember imagining his gnarled brown finger as the hand of a strong young man gripping the candelabra, which, by the way, my great-grandparents had lugged all the way down to the Badlands, where it had come in handy for killing snakes and gophers. They had given their only possession to Maude as a gesture of their gratitude. She had thrust it back at them the night they escaped.

That tall, seven-branched silver-plated instrument, with its finish worn down to tin in some spots, now stood in a place of honor in the center of our dining-room table. It held beeswax tapers, which had been lit during Easter dinner. A month later, in the little alcove on the school playground, I kissed Merlin Koppin. Our kiss was hard, passionate, strangely mature. Afterward, I walked home alone. I walked very slowly. Halfway there, I stopped and stared at a piece of the sidewalk that I'd crossed a thousand times and knew intimately. There was a crack in it—deep, long, jagged, and dark. It was the day when the huge old cottonwood trees shed cotton. Their heart-shaped leaves ticked and hissed high above me. The air was filled with falling down, and the gutters were plump with a snow of light. I had expected to feel joy, but instead I felt a confusion of sorrow, or maybe fear, for it suddenly seemed that my life was a hungry story and I its source and with this kiss I had begun to deliver myself to the words. ♦

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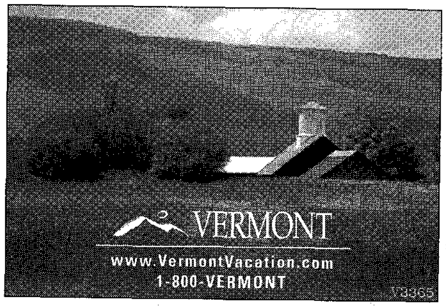
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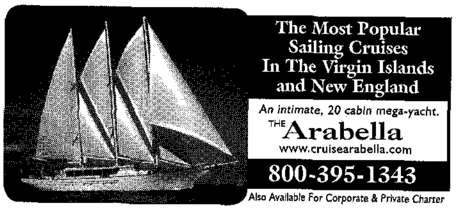
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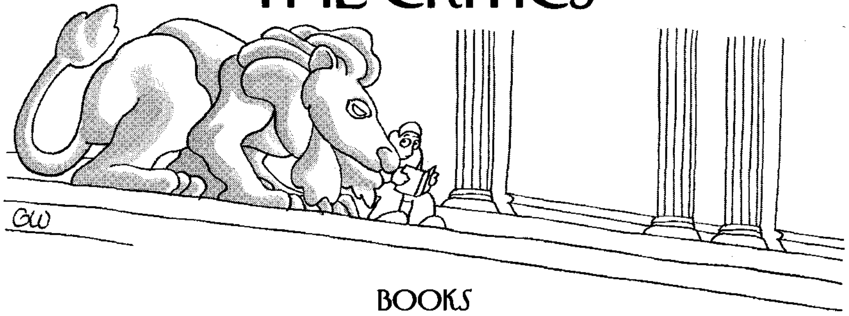

## BOOKS

# SILENT MASTER

*Henry James becomes the hero of a historical novel.*

### BY JOHN UPDIKE

Fiction about actual historical persons, so intrinsically conflicted and impure, feels like part of postmodernism's rampant eclecticism. True, examples exist before the twentieth century, in, say, Tolstoy's depiction of Napoleon and the Russian general Kutuzov in "War and Peace," and in the portraits of the poet Petronius, the emperor Nero, and the saint Peter in Sienkiewicz's "Quo Vadis?" But until truth became thoroughly relative, and image seized priority over fact, and the historical past became an attic full of potentially entertaining trinkets, the famous dead were allowed to rest in the record they left in their documents and documented deeds, in their letters and the accounts of their contemporaries. What could not be known was left unsaid. Henry James was especially fierce in guarding the sacred domain of fiction against profanation by the ungainly chimeras of historical fiction, which he flatly labelled "humbug." It is ironical, then, that he has become himself the hero of a historical novel, called, rather inevitably, "The Master," by the greatly gifted Irish writer Colm Tóibín (Scribners; $25).

The novel opens in January of 1895, in London, with the notorious failure of James's play "Guy Domville"; the première performance ended with the distinguished author being showered with jeers from the exasperated audience as he mistakenly ventured onstage for a curtain call. The novel closes in October of 1899 as James, now established in the cozy safety of his newly purchased house, Lamb House, in the East Sussex borough of Rye, says goodbye to his brother William, William's wife, Alice, and their daughter, Peggy, after a long visit, and returns with satisfaction to sole possession of his quiet rooms. The years 1895-1901 were titled, in the fourth volume of Leon Edel's five-volume biography of James, "The Treacherous Years," and as Tóibín imagines them they are not free of incident, though the public humiliation of the "Guy Domville" debacle is the most dramatic event. James visits and is visited, he remembers and ruminates. He reflects back upon his rootless childhood in Europe, his dear but vague mother, his less vague Aunt Kate, his vigorous, idealistic, and somewhat demented father; scenes of his youth include discovering Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" and witnessing his younger brother Wilky's agony from the wounds of a civil war that Henry and his older brother, William, evaded within the scholarly shelter of Harvard. Two women important in his life, his cousin Minny Temple and his fellow-author Constance Fenimore Woolson, are mournfully, fondly conjured up, in flashbacks tinged with suggestions of their betrayal by James, who, with the selfishness of a committed artist and the obliviousness of a closeted homosexual, ignored their appeals for rescue. Two young men, the Irish manservant Tom Hammond and the Norwegian-American sculptor Hendrik Andersen, catch Henry's eye and occupy his daydreams, but nothing overt takes place, beyond some freighted gazing and hugging. The plots of his works during this period (summarized by Edel as dealing with "children and ghosts—with the phantasmagoric—and the ways in which the imagination endows reality with realities of its own") are skillfully woven into Tóibín's gossamer skein of implications. Henry, mentally masticating a troubling glimpse of sexual provocation,

> realized now that this was something he had described in his books over and over, figures seen from a window or a doorway, a small gesture standing for a much larger relationship, something hidden suddenly revealed. He had written it, but just now he had seen it come alive, and yet he was not sure what it meant.

It is hard to know, without mastering the copious biographical literature that has grown up around the James family, what Tóibín has invented; my reading of the novel—not a fast read—was further slowed by frequent comparison of this fictional version with Edel's and Fred Kaplan's biographies. The fiction follows fact quite closely; for instance, James really did, in what seems a fantastic detail, hide himself in the audience of an Oscar Wilde play while his own play was disastrously unfolding a few London streets away. He did spend the month of August, 1865, in North Conway, New Hampshire, with his cousins the Temples—a month that provided James with memories of the bright, brash Minny Temple that fed both "Daisy Miller" and "The Portrait of a Lady." Also present during that summer idyll was Henry's friend Oliver Wendell Holmes, and, as Kaplan's biography puts it, "He and Holmes probably shared the one room in the crowded resort that Minny had been able to locate for them." To these facts Tóibín adds the supposition that James and Holmes for at least the first night shared the room's lone bed in the nude; the handsome Holmes, fresh from soldiering in the Civil War, is at ease with the situation, but James sleeps badly. In Tóibín's

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

*Colm Tóibín in New York City, June, 2004.*

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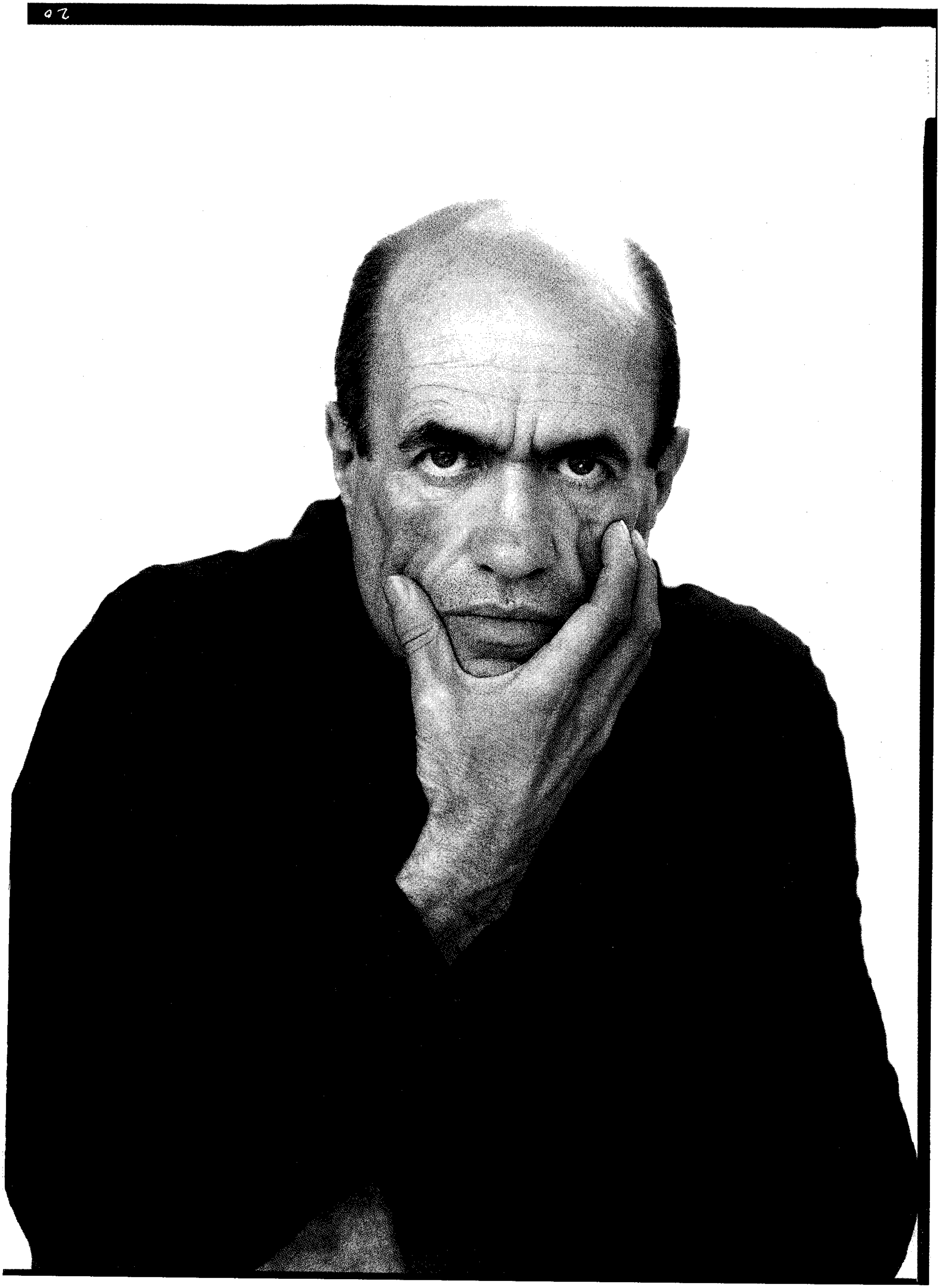

anatomizing of the incident, after Holmes "turned and cupped him with his body and placed one hand against his back and the other on his shoulder," the young James "knew not to turn or move, but . . . subtly . . . eased himself more comfortably into the shape of Holmes, closing his eyes and allowing his breath to come as freely as it would." Perhaps even this conjectured intimacy has a source in research; in "Roaming the Greenwood," from Tóibín's "Love in a Dark Time," a book of essays on homosexual writers, he mentions Sheldon Novick's "oddly convincing account of an affair that James may have had with Oliver Wendell Holmes, the future Supreme Court judge, in 1865 when he was twenty-two and Holmes twenty-four." Oddly convincing also, and highly circumstantial, is Tóibín's description of Henry James's servant problems: after his move to Rye, the couple who served him well in his London apartment, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, deteriorate into drunkenness and dishevelment, respectively; the hypersensitive master's slow and pained recognition that they must be fired is one of the novel's livelier stretches of social comedy. The vivid Smiths, however, don't make the index of any Edel volume, though there is a cursory mention or two; they do receive a paragraph in Kaplan's biography.

Tóibín's subject is the inward James, the master of literary creation and a vast hushed arena of dreams and memories and hoarded observations—a triumphantly inert protagonist. Outwardly, he is mute: "He was ready to begin again, to return to the old high art of fiction with ambitions now too deep and pure for any utterance." In exchange after exchange, our hero's telling contribution is silence: "He moved his lips, about to say something, and then stopped"; "He stared at her grimly and, he hoped, blankly and said nothing"; "He still did not speak"; "He said nothing"; "Because he did not reply, Hammond stopped and turned and they locked eyes"; "When he did not speak, she began again"; "Henry did not respond"; "He did not speak." The Master relishes silence not only in himself but in others: "He enjoyed how George Gammon let the silence linger"; "He admired her all the more for . . . how happy she seemed after a time to let silence reign between them." We sorely miss in the novel, and find abundantly in the biographies, the sound of James's voice, as it is heard in Edel's and Kaplan's frequent quotation of onrolling sentences and stabbing, mischievous phrases culled from his letters. Tóibín takes the divulgences and descriptions in these letters, and in those of James's correspondents, and turns them into a curious silent movie. In his telling, James's reticence extends to his letters home—

> He did not mention her in letters to his parents or his sister Alice or brother William. . . . He knew that every line of his letters was carefully analyzed in case some clue might be offered about where his heart lay. For his relatives in Boston, hungry for news, his heart remained as hard as he could make it

—and to his dinner-party conversation, "a polite and polished blankness":

> He was ready to listen, always ready to do that, but not prepared to reveal the mind at work, the imagination, or the depth of feeling. At times, he knew, the blankness was much more than a mask. It made its way inwards as well as outwards.

Tóibín's Henry James, for all his powers of subtlety and observation, contains blankness and silence because he does not face or act upon his homosexuality—which is apparent to almost every character in the novel except him. English hostesses provide attractive and receptive male servants for him; English conversational partners feed his fascination with overt homosexuals like Oscar Wilde and John Addington Symonds. But in the end James faithfully retreats into "the sad, helpless monotony of the self . . . the locked room of himself." In "Roaming the Greenwood," Tóibín is hard on James for this evasiveness: "It is astonishing how James managed to withhold his homosexuality from his work." Marcher, the hero of James's novella "The Beast in the Jungle," in Tóibín's reading doubles for the author:

> Clearly, he has been unable to love May Bartram, as James was unable to love Constance Fenimore Woolson; and it is open to readers whether or not they believe that May has understood all along something Marcher cannot entertain. He may have failed to love her because he was gay. And because he could not deal with his own sexuality, he failed to love anybody.

Marcher and James had the misfortune of living before the cheerful, liberating word "gay" was appropriated; the gray areas that were James's métier for groping, elaborately circumspect exploration are no place

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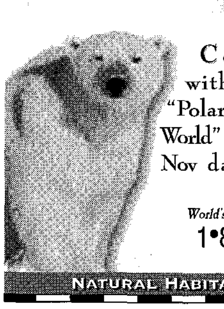
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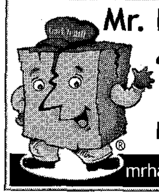
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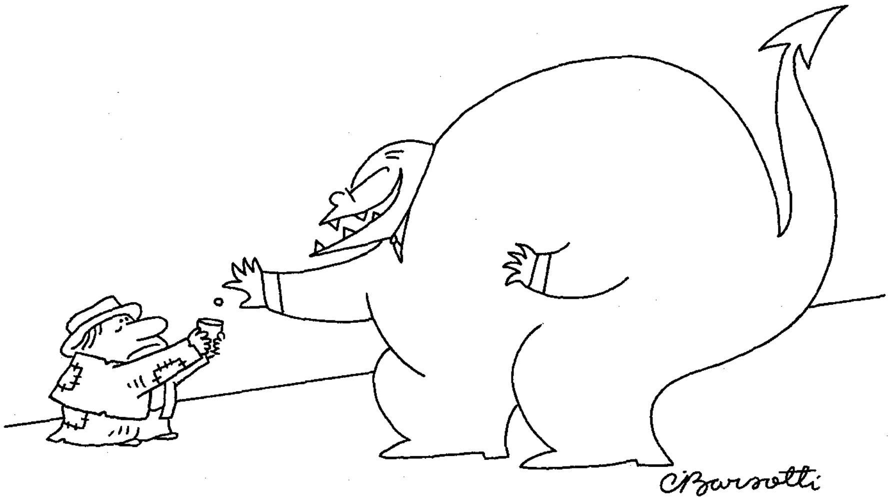
for the younger writer who has boldly outed himself in homophobic Eire. He does not entertain the possibility that James felt no need to be outed. The nineteenth century, hospitable to bachelor uncles and celibate scholar-saints, did not necessarily subscribe to the extremely high value the twentieth century assigned sex and its associated concept of "love." The, to our sense, grotesque innocence of Ruskin did not prevent him from being a great aesthetic theorist; John Singer Sargent's apparent lack of a love life did not annul his art. A James contemporary as vital and assertive and pleased with himself as George Bernard Shaw was relieved of his virginity only by a forceful intervention from the widow Jenny Patterson on his twenty-ninth birthday. Sex was not yet considered the only game to be played.

A hypnotic attraction seems to have inspired Tóibín's extensive, misty, and intricate work of reconstruction, a marvel of lightly worn research and modulated tone. Tóibín is circumstantially precise about James's Florence; he details the bicycle ride from Lamb House to the beach. Having spent considerable time in this country, he is good on James as an American, nostalgic for "American voices, so filled with enthusiasm, [which] were not as original as they imagined, nor as uncomplicated by history as they supposed." As I was beginning to read "The Master," I happened to tune in an often rerun PBS program on great modern pianists, in which one performer was described as drawing music from the piano without ever appearing to "do battle" with the instrument; Tóibín never appears to do battle with the English language, even to the extent of attempting a pastiche of James's ornate later style. The style of "The Master" flows transparently, though more primly articulated than that of Tóibín's previous novel, "The Blackwater Lightship." In a suitable context, such as a tense lunch James provides for the distinguished Lily Norton, Tóibín can strike off sentences with a Jamesian (or Austenesque) edge of dry, world-weary precision:

> He knew that Lily Norton would not be indelicate enough to mention the matter to anyone save her aunt Grace, who would be too interested in the news not to be fully deprived of it.
>
> As he studied her across the table, it occurred to him that re-creation of herself, her deliberate broadening of her effect, could have atrophied other qualities more endearing to a potential suitor.



"Now, no class warfare, O.K.?"

• •

When the wandering plot touches an Irish topic or scene, an extra animation, conveying a hidden animus, enters in. James attempts to take refuge from the disgrace of "Guy Domville" in Dublin, accepting the hospitality of several members of the English governing, or, one might say, occupying, class. "The squalor of Ireland came right up to the castle gates and left him depressed and haunted," and he is maliciously teased, by another guest, about the James family's humble origins in rural Bailieborough. The Irish theme returns toward the novel's end, when one of James's Dublin hostesses, the irrepressible Lady Wolseley, shows up in Rye and enjoys an exchange of views with the visiting William James, who opines that "England has much to answer for in the way the country has been run." She serenely replies that she quite agrees, that her husband "spoke to the queen personally about the matter," and that "they both took the view that once Mr. Parnell was removed and not replaced, then all the Fenianism would die down." She cites the artistic Lady Gregory as her informant: "Her estates are in the very interior. She says that there is no social outrage of any sort in Ireland."

The arrival of William James and his family at Lamb House not only excites conversation on political topics; it activates, at last, scenes and dialogues in the living present, and shows in action the family dynamic that has been dolorously coloring Henry's recollections. In his older brother's presence, he takes on a new character and a new name—Harry. He abandons his cagey silence and, in the face of William's eloquently expressed plea that the novelist return to America and its subject matter ("I believe that the English can never be your true subject. And I believe that your style has suffered from the strain of constantly dramatizing social insipidity"), fights back, in accents almost of rudeness:

> "May I interrupt you?" Henry asked. "Or is this a lecture whose finish will be marked by the ringing of a bell?"

William wants him to write a novel about the Puritans; Harry, closely quoting a letter that the historical Henry James wrote to Sarah Orne Jewett, proposes to end the conversation "by stating clearly to you that I view the historical novel as tainted by a fatal cheapness." Not just literary matters but family matters—husbandly heart attacks, wifely confidences, adolescent Dickens-reading by Peggy James—spice up these last pages, before the not very revelatory dying fall of the novel's snug ending.

Henry has recovered his vocation; but we never see it as lost. From early youth, a highly intelligent man commits himself to becoming a writer, and he becomes just that, sacrificing any feeling or attachment that gets in his way: this is the plot. The non-writing Henry, moseying through the Jamesian facts as they have emerged in biographies and published correspondence, less experiences these facts than haunts them, with a luminous blur of a face. There is a soapstone quality to his bust as carved here. ♦

BOOKS

# BAD COMMA

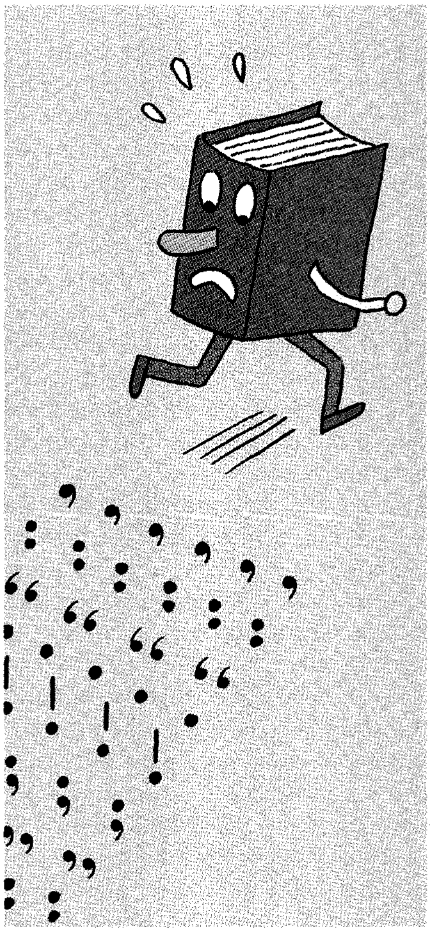
*Lynne Truss's strange grammar.*

BY LOUIS MENAND

The first punctuation mistake in "Eats, Shoots & Leaves: The Zero Tolerance Approach to Punctuation" (Gotham; $17.50), by Lynne Truss, a British writer, appears in the dedication, where a nonrestrictive clause is not preceded by a comma. It is a wild ride downhill from there. "Eats, Shoots & Leaves" presents itself as a call to arms, in a world spinning rapidly into subliteracy, by a hip yet unapologetic curmudgeon, a stickler for the rules of writing. But it's hard to fend off the suspicion that the whole thing might be a hoax.

The foreword, by Frank McCourt, contains another comma-free nonrestrictive clause ("I feel no such sympathy for the manager of my local supermarket who must have a cellarful of apostrophes he doesn't know what to do with") and a superfluous ellipsis. The preface, by Truss, includes a misplaced apostrophe ("printers' marks") and two misused semicolons: one that separates unpunctuated items in a list and one that sets off a dependent clause. About half the semicolons in the rest of the book are either unnecessary or ungrammatical, and the comma is deployed as the mood strikes. Sometimes, phrases such as "of course" are set off by commas; sometimes, they are not. Doubtful, distracting, and unwarranted commas turn up in front of restrictive phrases ("Naturally we become timid about making our insights known, in such inhospitable conditions"), before correlative conjunctions ("Either this will ring bells for you, or it won't"), and in prepositional phrases ("including biblical names, and any foreign name with an unpronounced final 's' "). Where you most expect punctuation, it may not show up at all: "You have to give initial capitals to the words Biro and Hoover otherwise you automatically get tedious letters from solicitors."

Parentheses are used to add independent clauses to the ends of sentences: "I bought a copy of Eric Partridge's *Usage and Abusage* and covered it in sticky-backed plastic so that it would last a lifetime (it has)." Citation form varies: one passage from the Bible is identified as "Luke, xxiii, 43" and another, a page later, as "Isaiah xl, 3." The word "abuzz" is printed with a hyphen, which it does not have. We are informed that when a sentence ends with a quotation American usage always places the terminal punctuation inside the quotation marks, which is not so. (An American would not write "Who said 'I cannot tell a lie?' ") A line from "My Fair Lady" is misquoted ("The Arabs learn Arabian with the speed of summer lightning"). And it is stated that *The New Yorker*, "that famously punctilious periodical," renders "the nineteen-eighties" as the "1980's," which it does not. *The New Yorker* renders "the nineteen-eighties" as "the nineteen-eighties."


PHILIPPE PETIT-ROULET

Then, there is the translation problem. For some reason, the folks at Gotham Books elected not to make any changes for the American edition, a typesetting convenience that makes the book virtually useless for American readers. As Truss herself notes, some conventions of British usage employed in "Eats, Shoots & Leaves" are taboo in the United States—for example, the placement of commas and periods outside quotation marks, "like this". The book also omits the serial comma, as in "eats, shoots and leaves," which is acceptable in the United States only in newspapers and commercial magazines. The supreme peculiarity of this peculiar publishing phenomenon is that the British are less rigid about punctuation and related matters, such as footnote and bibliographic form, than Americans are. An Englishwoman lecturing Americans on semicolons is a little like an American lecturing the French on sauces. Some of Truss's departures from punctuation norms are just British laxness. In a book that pretends to be all about firmness, though, this is not a good excuse. The main rule in grammatical form is to stick to whatever rules you start out with, and the most objectionable thing about Truss's writing is its inconsistency. Either Truss needed a copy editor or her copy editor needed a copy editor. Still, the book has been a No. 1 best-seller in both England and the United States.

"I am not a grammarian," Truss says. No quarrel there. Although she has dug up information about things like the history of the colon, Truss is so uninterested in the actual rules of punctuation that she even names the ones she flouts—for example, the rule that semicolons cannot be used to set off dependent clauses. (Unless you are using it to disambiguate items in a list, a semicolon should be used only between independent clauses—that is, clauses that can stand as complete sentences on their own.) That is the rule, she explains, but she violates it frequently. She thinks this makes her sound like Virginia Woolf. And she admits that her editors are continually removing the commas that she tends to place before conjunctions.

Why would a person who is not just vague about the rules but disinclined to follow them bother to produce a guide to punctuation? Truss, a former sports columnist for the London *Times*, appears to have been set a-blaze by two obsessions: superfluous apostrophes in commercial signage ("Potatoe's" and that sort of thing) and the elision of punctuation, along with uppercase letters, in e-mail messages. Are these portents of the night, soon coming, in which no man can read? Truss warns us that they are—"If we value the way we have been trained to think by centuries of absorbing the culture of the printed word, we must not allow the language to return to the chaotic *scriptio continua* swamp from which it so bravely crawled less than two thousand years ago"—but it's hard to know how seriously to take her, because her prose is so caffeinated that you can't always separate the sense from the sensibility. And that, undoubtedly, is the point, for it is the sensibility, the "I'm mad as hell" act, that has got her her readers. A characteristic passage:

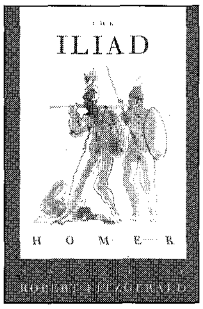
> For any true stickler, you see, the sight of the plural word "Book's" with an apostrophe in it will trigger a ghastly private emotional process similar to the stages of bereavement, though greatly accelerated. First there is shock. Within seconds, shock gives way to disbelief, disbelief to pain, and pain to anger. Finally (and this is where the analogy breaks down), anger gives way to a righteous urge to perpetrate an act of criminal damage with the aid of a permanent marker.

Some people do feel this way, and they do not wish to be handed the line that "language is always evolving" or some other slice of liberal pie. They don't even want to know what the distinction between a restrictive and a non-restrictive clause might be. They are like people who lose control when they hear a cell phone ring in a public place: they just need to vent. Truss is their Jeremiah. They don't care where her commas are, because her heart is in the right place.

Though she has persuaded herself otherwise, Truss doesn't want people to care about correctness. She wants them to care about writing and about using the full resources of the language. "Eats, Shoots & Leaves" is really a "decline of print culture" book disguised as a style manual (poorly disguised). Truss has got things mixed up because she has confused two aspects of writing: the technological and the aesthetic. Writing is an instrument that was invented for recording, storing, and communicating. Using the relatively small number of symbols on the keyboard, you can record, store, and communicate a virtually infinite range of information, and encode meanings with virtually any degree of complexity. The system works entirely by relationships—the relationship of one symbol to another, of one word to another, of one sentence to another. The function of most punctuation—commas, colons and semicolons, dashes, and so on—is to help organize the relationships among the parts of a sentence. Its role is semantic: to add precision and complexity to meaning. It increases the information potential of strings of words.

What most punctuation does *not* do is add color, texture, or flavor to the writing. Those are all things that belong to the aesthetics, and literary aesthetics are weirdly intangible. You can't taste writing. It has no color and makes no sound. Its shape has no significance. But people say that someone's prose is "colorful" or "pungent" or "shapeless" or "lyrical." When written language is decoded, it seems to trigger sensations that are unique to writing but that usually have to be described by analogy to some other activity. When deli owners put up signs that read " 'Iced' Tea," the single quotation marks are intended to add extraliterary significance to the message, as if they were the grammatical equivalent of red ink. Truss is quite clear about the role played by punctuation in making words mean something. But she also—it is part of her general inconsistency—suggests that semicolons, for example, signal readers to pause. She likes to animate her punctuation marks, to talk about the apostrophe and the dash as though they were little cartoon characters livening up the page. She is anthropomorphizing a technology. It's a natural thing to do. As she points out, in earlier times punctuation did a lot more work than it does today, and some of the work involved adjusting the timing in sentences. But this is no longer the norm, and trying to punctuate in that spirit now only makes for ambiguity and annoyance.

One of the most mysterious of writing's immaterial properties is what people call "voice." Editors sometimes refer to it, in a phrase that underscores the paradox at the heart of the idea, as "the voice on the page." Prose can show many virtues, in-



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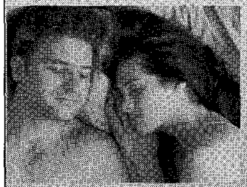

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cluding originality, without having a voice. It may avoid cliché, radiate conviction, be grammatically so clean that your grandmother could eat off it. But none of this has anything to do with this elusive entity the "voice." There are probably all kinds of literary sins that prevent a piece of writing from having a voice, but there seems to be no guaranteed technique for creating one. Grammatical correctness doesn't insure it. Calculated incorrectness doesn't, either. Ingenuity, wit, sarcasm, euphony, frequent outbreaks of the first-person singular—any of these can enliven prose without giving it a voice. You can set the stage as elaborately as you like, but either the phantom appears or it doesn't.

When it does appear, the subject is often irrelevant. "I do not care for movies very much and I rarely see them," W. H. Auden wrote to the editors of *The Nation* in 1944. "Further, I am suspicious of criticism as the literary genre which, more than any other, recruits epigones, pedants without insight, intellectuals without love. I am all the more surprised, therefore, to find myself not only reading Mr. Agee before I read anyone else in *The Nation* but also consciously looking forward all week to reading him again." A lot of the movies that James Agee reviewed between 1942 and 1948, when he was *The Nation's* film critic, were negligible then and are forgotten now. But you can still read his columns with pleasure. They continue to pass the ultimate test of good writing: it is more painful to stop reading them than it is to keep going. When you get to the end of Agee's sentences, you wish, like Auden, that there were more sentences.

Writing that has a voice is writing that has something like a personality. But whose personality is it? As with all art, there is no straight road from the product back to the producer. There are writers loved for their humor who are not funny people, and writers admired for their eloquence who swallow their words, never look you in the eye, and can't seem to finish a sentence. Wisdom on the page correlates with wisdom in the writer about as frequently as a high batting average correlates with a high I.Q.: they just seem to have very little to do with one another. Witty and charming people can produce prose of sneering sententiousness, and fretful neurotics can, to their readers, seem as though they must be delightful to live with. Personal drabness, through some obscure neural kink, can deliver verbal blooms. Readers who meet a writer whose voice they have fallen in love with usually need to make a small adjustment afterward in order to hang on to the infatuation.

The uncertainty about what it means for writing to have a voice arises from the metaphor itself. Writers often claim that they never write something that they would not say. It is hard to know how this could be literally true. Speech is somatic, a bodily function, and it is accompanied by physical inflections—tone of voice, winks, smiles, raised eyebrows, hand gestures—that are not reproducible in writing. Spoken language is repetitive, fragmentary, contradictory, limited in vocabulary, loaded down with space holders ("like," "um," "you know")—all the things writing teachers tell students not to do. And yet people can generally make themselves understood right away. As a medium, writing is a million times weaker than speech. It's a hieroglyph competing with a symphony.

The other reason that speech is a bad metaphor for writing is that writing, for ninety-nine per cent of people who do it, is the opposite of spontaneous. Some writers write many drafts of a piece; some write one draft, at the pace of a snail after a night on the town. But chattiness, slanginess, in-your-face-ness, and any other features of writing that are conventionally characterized as "like speech" are usually the results of laborious experimentation, revision, calibration, walks around the block, unnecessary phone calls, and recalibration. Writers, by nature, tend to be people in whom *l'esprit de l'escalier* is a recurrent experience: they are always thinking of the perfect riposte after the moment for saying it has passed. So they take a few years longer and put it in print. Writers are not mere copyists of language; they are polishers, embellishers, perfecters. They spend hours getting the timing right—so that what they write sounds completely unrehearsed.

Does this mean that the written "voice" is never spontaneous and natural but always an artificial construction of language? This is not a proposition that most writers could accept. The act of writing is personal; it *feels* personal. The unfunny person who is a humorous writer does not think, of her work, "That's not really me." Critics speak of "the persona," a device for compelling, in the interests of licensing the interpretative impulse, a divorce between author and text. But no one, or almost no one, writes "as a persona." People write as people, and if there were nothing personal about the result few human beings would try to manufacture it for a living. Composition is a troublesome, balky, sometimes sleep-depriving business. What makes it especially so is that the rate of production is beyond the writer's control. You have to wait, and what you are waiting for is something inside you to come up with the words. That something, for writers, is the voice.

A better basis than speaking for the metaphor of voice in writing is singing. You can't tell if someone can sing or not from the way she talks, and although "natural phrasing" and "from the heart" are prized attributes of song, singing that way requires rehearsal, preparation, and getting in touch with whatever it is inside singers that, by a neural kink or the grace of God, enables them to turn themselves into vessels of musical sound. Truss is right (despite what she preaches) when she implies, by her own practice, that the rules really don't have that much to do with it. Before Luciano Pavarotti walked onstage at the opera house, he was in the habit of taking a bite of an apple. That's how he helped his voice to sound spontaneous and natural.

What writers hear when they are trying to write is something more like singing than like speaking. Inside your head, you're yakking away to yourself all the time. Getting *that* voice down on paper is a depressing experience. When you write, you're trying to transpose what you're thinking into something that is less like an annoying drone and more like a piece of music. This writing voice is the voice that people are surprised not to encounter when they "meet the writer." The writer is not so surprised. Writers labor constantly under the anxiety that this voice, though they have found it a hundred times before, has disappeared forever, and that they will never hear it again. Some writers, when they begin a new piece, spend hours rereading their old stuff, trying to remember how they did it, what it's supposed to sound like. This rarely works; nothing works reliably. Sooner or later, usually later than everyone involved would have preferred, the voice shows up, takes a bite of the apple, and walks onstage. ◆

# BRIEFLY NOTED

The Tyrant's Novel, *by Thomas Keneally (Nan A. Talese/Doubleday; $25).* The protagonist of Keneally's latest novel is a successful author in a country that bears more than a passing resemblance to Iraq. One day, he is ordered to write a novel to be published under the name of the country's dictator—and given only a month for the task. As luck would have it, he has recently completed a novel that, with slight modification, will fit the bill. However, he has buried the novel with his late wife. Can he bear to disinter the manuscript in order to save himself? Though concerned with current events, Keneally takes care to give his tale wider resonance. The Middle Eastern characters go by English names, a technique that makes them less foreign to the reader and draws parallels between the subtle self-censorship of Western commercialism and the blunter kind practiced by the arts community in a dictatorship.

Transmission, *by Hari Kunzru (Dutton; $24.95).* When Indian programming whiz Arjun Mehta's dreams of success in America are imperilled by the collapse of the Internet bubble, he unleashes a virus on the world's computers, wreaking havoc on a scale surpassing even his own expectations. Named after a Bollywood star, the Leela virus halts trains, crashes power grids, and brings international commerce to a halt. Caught up in the chaos is Guy Swift, a smug star of the new economy working to keep his London branding agency afloat. Kunzru flits dexterously between Guy's bullish hubris and Arjun's desperate toils, creating a sharp snapshot of the heady time when everyone was "surfing the wave of innovation" in a seemingly boundless boom. The insistent trendiness of the novel's preoccupations risks becoming tiresome, but Kunzru's engagingly wired prose and agile plotting sweep all before them, as the characters career toward ruin.

American Gulag, *by Mark Dow (California; $27.50).* Long before Abu Ghraib, and even before September 11th, detainees in America's immigration prisons were being stripped, beaten, and sexually abused. Dow has spent years interviewing inmates, guards, and officials, and he gives a jarring account of a dangerously arbitrary system. Alien inmates—from political refugees who present themselves at airports to permanent residents convicted of misdemeanors—can be locked up for years, in harsh conditions, with no real recourse. Dow argues that the practices of the I.N.S. (which was folded into the Department of Homeland Security in 2003) laid the groundwork for the indefinite detentions and the muting of civil liberties after September 11th. By "blurring the distinction between alien, criminal, and terrorist," detention takes on its own brutal logic. After a Somali man is left to bake in the sun in a sealed car to discourage others from applying for asylum, an immigration official explains, "I'm not trying to prosecute them. I just want them to quit coming here."

Sonata for Jukebox, *by Geoffrey O'Brien (Counterpoint; $27.50).* O'Brien, a poet and critic, narrates his life through the recordings he has listened to—45s, LPs, radio jingles—shaping his memoir as a sequence of musical madeleines. Moving chronologically, he expands on the assertion that "the age of recording is necessarily an age of nostalgia": the covers of jazz albums recall a childhood home where music was constant, even when it was "turned down so low it sounds like the scratching of a squirrel trapped in the walls"; a Burt Bacharach song exhibits "well-bred melancholia, the hidden side of a Kennedy-era effervescence"; and the Bee Gees' "How Deep Is Your Love?" incongruously takes over the lobby of a movie theatre in Osaka. But, for all the luxurious reminiscence, O'Brien is not merely a nostalgist, and finds the present as rich as the past—a healthy state for a critic, because, as he says, "you need ears cleared of that rattling debris to receive new signals."

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POP MUSIC

# SINGLES

*What's on the radio.*

BY SASHA FRERE-JONES

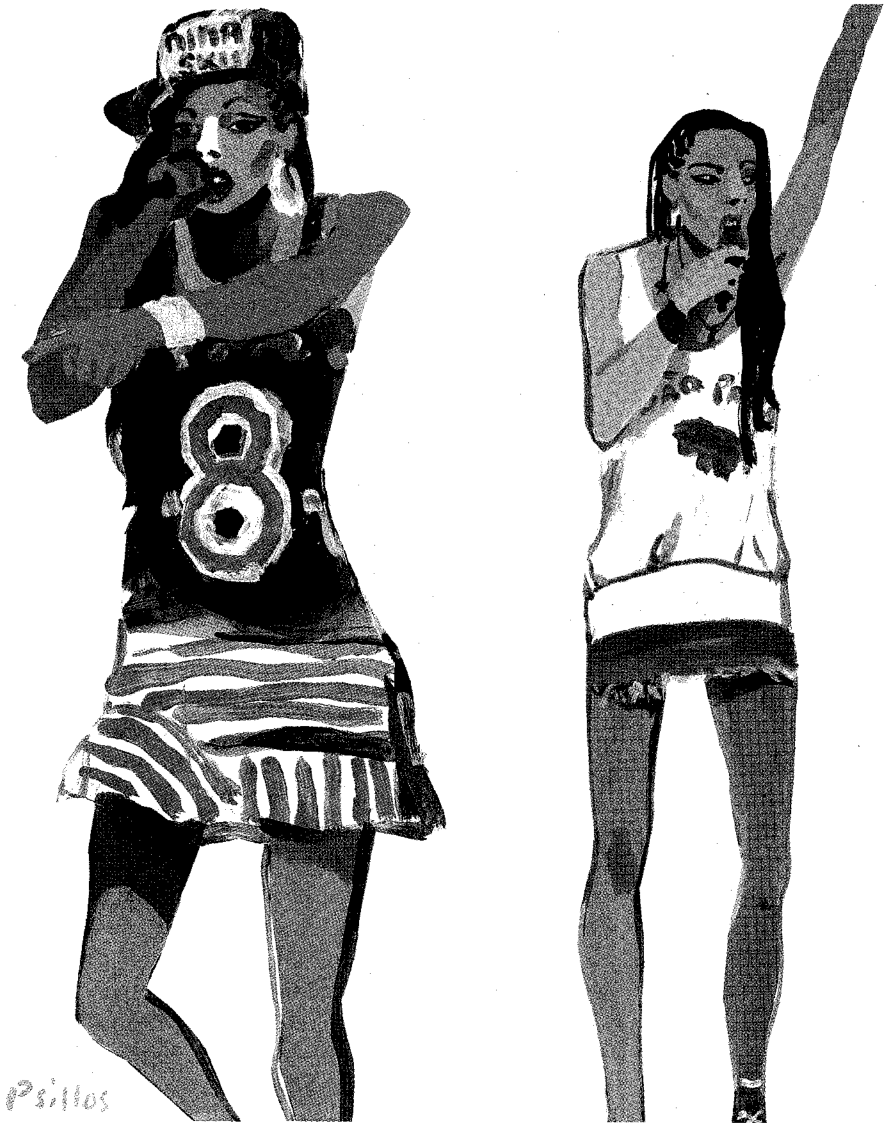
Anyone who has lived through a summer in the city knows that there is no force in the world stronger than girls singing along to the radio while skipping rope. Without them, the season might as well merge with spring and be done with it. A song that proves it this summer is "Move Ya Body," by Nina Sky, featuring Jabba (Next Plateau/Universal). It's one of the many songs employing reworked dance-hall "rhythms," the backing tracks that singers and m.c.s in Jamaica use as a foundation for their own records. (It is common practice in Jamaica for a rhythm to be used by upward of thirty performers.) Last year, several American pop singers and m.c.s sang over a rhythm full of handclaps known as Diwali, which was originally produced by a man named Steven (Lenky) Marsden. This year, the rhythm being used here is called Coolie Dance, created by a producer named Cordell (Scatta) Burrell. It rides a steady handclap and a bongo sound, less syncopated than Diwali but faster, inching toward disco. A Jamaican performer named Mr. Vegas had some success with a version called "Pull Up," and an ode to large behinds called "Culo," by a Cuban-American rapper named Pitbull, is currently on the charts. But it's "Move Ya Body" that sounds like Flatbush Avenue with the fire hydrants open and the radios on. Nina Sky is actually two girls, Nicole and Natalie Albino, who are eighteen-year-old twins of Puerto Rican descent. Their voices are as light as the beat, almost distracted, as if they were doing something else while they sing. My money is on double Dutch.

The fluctuation in popularity of certain genres is tracked by music magazines and summarized periodically in such headlines as "the death of hip-hop" and "the return of rock." This is not necessarily weather you need to keep track of, if it even exists. Any good song, of any genre, is potentially a huge hit. Hoobastank's "The Reason" (Island), for example, would have been popular at any point in the past twenty years. It is easy to imagine Meat Loaf or Rod Stewart or any number of gifted, irony-free singers performing the song, a catchall that neatly synthesizes regret and romanticism—think of your fifteenth high-school reunion compressed into four minutes. The singer, Doug Robb, opens with a talk-show apologia: "I'm not a perfect person. . . . I never meant to do those things to you." It's a carefully staged work, close to a ballad but with enough loud guitars to signify as rock. Hoobastank builds the song from a circular guitar figure, adding strings and CinemaScope as needed. Then, just when the song is about to settle for being simply effective, it shifts satisfyingly into an unexpected bridge section. (Never underestimate a bridge.) Widespread downloading helped push the song to No. 1 on the *Billboard* pop charts in May, and it also found its way into one of the final episodes of "Friends," a series that often seemed like a high-school reunion that would never end.

If you want an executive summary of pop music, Usher Raymond's "Yeah!," featuring Lil Jon & Ludacris (LaFace), is it. The single is taken from Usher's fifth album, "Confessions," which sold more than a million copies in its first week of release—the biggest début of 2004. "Yeah!" became the first single since Eminem's "Lose Yourself," in 2002, to hold the No. 1 *Billboard* position for twelve consecutive weeks. (Impressively, Usher currently has two other singles on the charts.) Like his rival Justin Timberlake, Usher works in the Michael Jackson tradition: they are nimble dancers who sing falsetto and, in their lyrics, approach paramours as friends rather than as conquerors. Both fall short of Jackson as singers, but Usher has been more commercially successful than Timberlake, and his is the better voice. It isn't as distinctive as Jackson's, but he knows how t use his sweet, open-throated midrange t maximum advantage.

The album focusses largely on betrayal and guilt, but "Yeah!" is buil for dancing. The song's producer is Li Jon, the most visible figure in "crunk," booming, dance-floor strain of Souther hip-hop. Though Usher is a lithe, parent-friendly figure and Lil Jon's gold teeth and omnipresent goblet make him look vaguely like a pirate, they use similar strategies. Neither favors idiosyncrasy or surprise; both capitalize instead on what has worked before and consistently provide a new iteration of it. "Yeah!" consists mainly of four shrill synthesizer notes, a wayward bell, and some handclaps. The keyboard motif never changes; the only sign that the chorus has arrived is a sour little flute sound bumping leisurely down to land on a blue note. Lil Jon urges Usher on by yelling "O.K.!" and "Yeah!" and not much else. The lyrics are about a guy meeting a girl in a club and cheating on his girlfriend, but Usher is more interested in playing with his voice than in telling a story. He sings the way he dances, tossing packets of information into the air like text messages, each idea formed but not obviously connected to the next one. When a certain word delights him, he'll harmonize with himself and send his voice around the stereo field like Tinker Bell. The rapper Ludacris, an m.c. who specializes in making bawdy, funny cameo appearances on other people's songs, is more straightforward. In "Yeah!" he raps, "Watch out, my outfit's ridiculous / in the club, looking so conspicuous." The song has no particular peak or shape. It opens like an engagement-ring box, glitters, and then shuts. Don't be surprised if you open the box seventeen times in a row.

Mario Winans is on the charts now as an R. & B. singer, but he has been a member of Sean Combs's team of record producers, known as the Hitmen, for several years, creating beats for rappers and songs for R. & B. singers. If Combs and the Hitmen have one undisputed skill, it is finding good songs to sample, including songs that have been sampled before. Winans's current hit single, "I Don't Wanna Know," featuring Enya & P. Diddy (Bad Boy), is no exception. The primary melody here is provided by a sample from Enya's "Boadicea" that might sound familiar, having been featured in the Fugees' 1996 single "Ready or Not." (The album it appeared on, "The Score," was one of the biggest-selling hip-hop albums of all time.) The Fugees used the excerpt without permission, and were reportedly compelled to give all the song's earnings to Enya when her manager, Nicky Ryan, decided to "punish" them. This year, for "I Don't Wanna Know," P. Diddy called Ryan, and was granted permission for the sample in return for giving Enya sixty per cent of the profits and name billing. The sample is a gorgeous figure—Enya hums twelve notes over a loping keyboard bass line, lost in echo. In 1996, I liked the sample in the Fugees song so much that I bought the original, only to find that twelve notes is the perfect dose of Enya. To make the sample work this time around, Winans simply has to stay out of the way, which he does by pleading, feebly, for his lover to keep her indiscretions to herself. (Diddy provides a rap that will not distract anyone unduly.) This is one of those moments when pop can be simultaneously conservative and radical. Diddy and Winans have used a hit to make a slightly lesser hit, which is as conservative as it gets, while radically reinforcing the impression that another artist's entire contribution to pop music can be reduced to several seconds.



*Nina Sky is Nicole and Natalie Albino, who are eighteen-year-old twins.*

DEMETRIOS PSILLOS

In November of 2003, after several unimpressive CDs, Jay-Z, who is regarded by many as the best rapper alive, released "The Black Album" and declared that it would be his last. Drawing on the contributions of a wide variety of producers, the CD has a fierce sense of its own importance, and it has done well commercially, selling more than two million copies. The most remarkable track, "99 Problems," is now a single (Roc-a-Fella/Def Jam). It was produced by Rick Rubin, and it is his first collaboration with Jay-Z. In the early nineteen-eighties, Rubin co-founded Def Jam, one of hip-hop's most significant labels, and produced records for Run-DMC and the Beastie Boys that codified and popularized what was then considered by many to be novelty music. In the last decade, Rubin has produced successful pop acts, and created a series of records that matched the ailing Johnny Cash with contemporary pop hits. It took Jay-Z's imminent retirement to lure him back to hip-hop.

On "99 Problems," the music behind Jay-Z is two enormous drumbeats layered one over the other and stapled together by a giant guitar chord that hits the downbeat of every other measure with the force of a truck dropped from the Throgs Neck Bridge. Jay-Z's three verses play out different takes on the word "bitch"—an unfortunate genesis for an angry essay, a brilliant short play, and a pretty good harangue. Between criticizing hip-hop magazines and radio stations in the first verse and dismissing a rival in the third, Jay-Z addresses the issue of racial profiling. He plays both himself and the police officer who, for no apparent reason, stops his car: "License and registration, and step out of the car. / Are you carrying a weapon on you? I know a lot of you are." Jay-Z responds, "I ain't stepping out of shit, all my paper's legit." To which the cop responds, "Well, do you mind if I look around the car a little bit?" The scene culminates in the appearance of a K-9 search dog, this verse's bitch. The easeful punch of Jay-Z's line readings deftly conveys the sang-froid required in the face of everyday racism. As the song explodes repeatedly, it is unclear whether we are hearing the ordnance of a race war or the celebration of an armistice. "99 Problems" does many things right, and refusing to be reassuring is one of them. It harnesses all the energy of a cultural car crash while recognizing that some people go home bruised and some never go home at all. ♦

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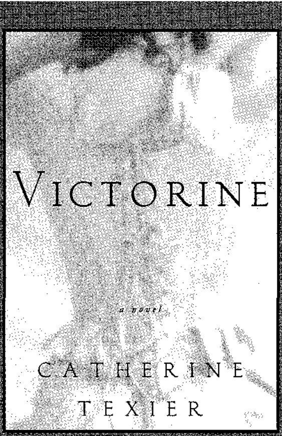

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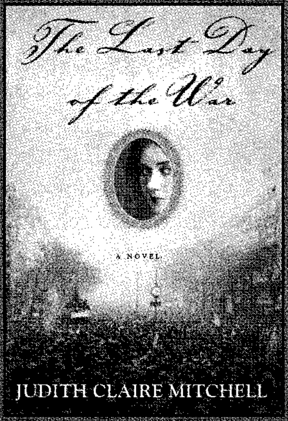

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### THE CURRENT CINEMA

# GEORGE & ME

*Michael Moore's viciously funny attack on the Bush Administration.*

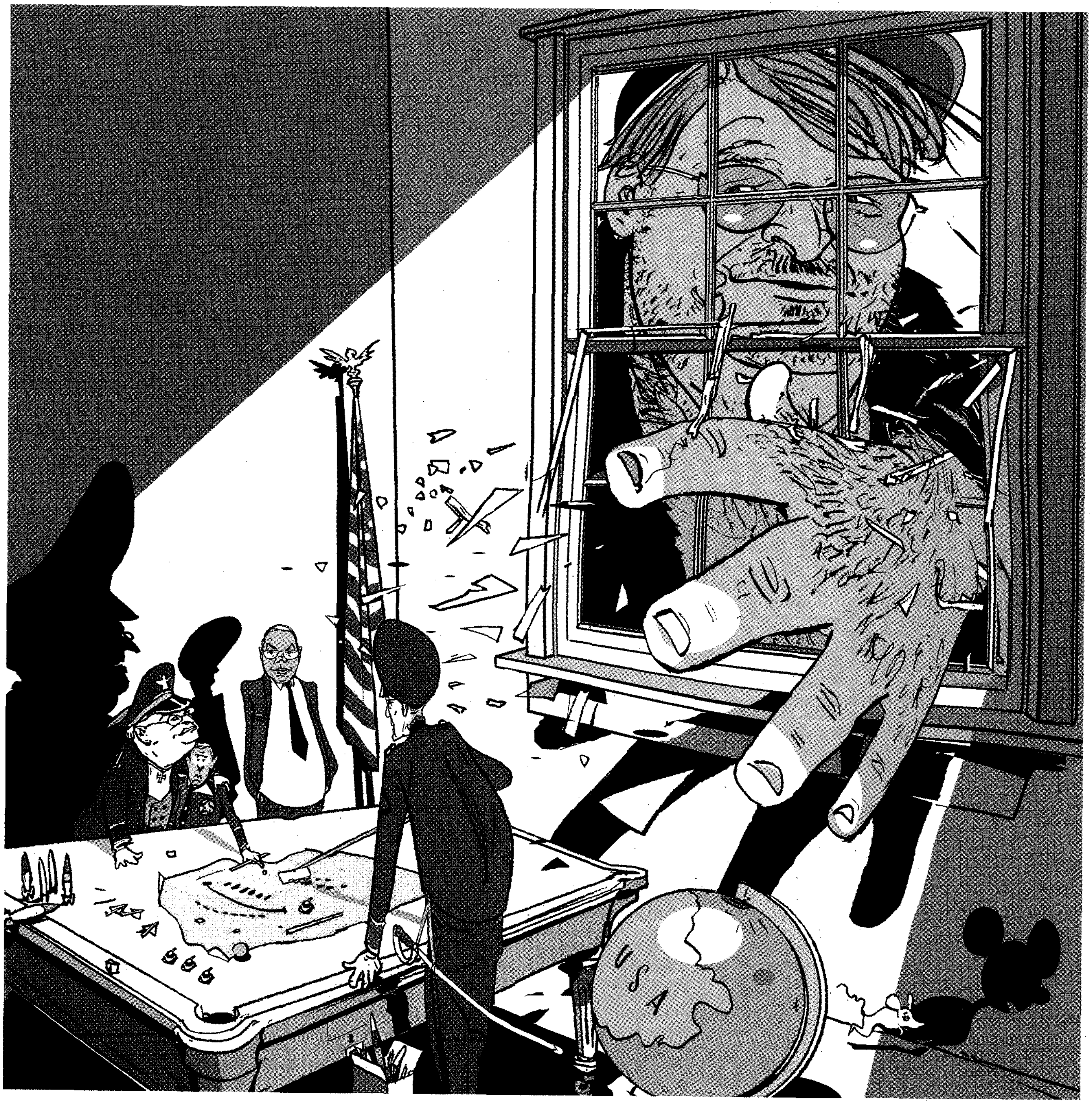
BY DAVID DENBY

In Michael Moore's new documentary, "Fahrenheit 9/11," George W. Bush sets his jaw, leans forward, and tells a group of reporters that terrorism must be destroyed. Then, turning away, he says, "Now watch this drive," and tees off. A golfer, a bird hunter, a sportive wit at gatherings of the super-rich ("Some people call you the élite. I call you my base"), the President is often at play in "Fahrenheit 9/11." In this incendiary and viciously funny attack on the Bush Administration—a whirlwind of political charges, sinister implications, and derision—the President comes off as a betrayer and a fool who has all the substance of a stuffed doll. Moore accuses Bush of handing part of America's sovereignty to the Saudis; he implies that the President, after 9/11, was more effective at frightening the electorate than at pursuing the terrorists. Given its mixture of anguish and contempt, "Fahrenheit 9/11" can't miss becoming a hit, with the result that the Republican Party and its allies will be all over Michael Moore for months. I have some difficulties with Moore myself, and I'm not entirely impressed by the standing ovation and the Palme d'Or that the film received recently at Cannes, where the audience may have been all too eager to applaud its own detestation of the United States. Still, this is Moore's most powerful movie—the largest in scope, the most resourceful and skillful in means—and the best things in it have little to do with his usual ideological take on American power and George Bush. In the last third of the film, Moore gets hold of a genuine protagonist, and he has the good sense to stay out of her way.

Her name is Lila Lipscomb, and he finds her in Flint, Michigan, the home town to which he obsessively returns—Flint, the former industrial paradise destroyed by General Motors, whose emblematic decision in the eighties to close many of its plants in the city arrived like a Biblical curse. Years have gone by since the ruination, and Lila Lipscomb is still in there fighting—she works at a non-profit agency, helping the unemployed. Lipscomb, who is white, is married to an African-American, and the couple have several children, two of whom have served in the armed forces. A conservative Democrat who used to hate antiwar protesters, she describes her family as part of the "backbone" of the country. She's not an intellectual or analytical person, but she knows who she is and what she wants to say.

All this is established in two initial interviews. Then the unimaginable happens: one of Lila's sons, Sergeant Michael Pedersen, dies in the Iraq war. And, as we find out in a letter from Pedersen that Lila reads to her family, he died without knowing what in the world he was doing in the desert. At which point, Lila gives way to unappeasable grief. Dazed and untethered, she makes a pilgrimage to the White House. In a way, she becomes a more authentic version of Michael Moore, who is always seeking to confront power. In Washington, Moore and his crew follow her around; we can guess that he urged her along, and, sure enough, some skeptical woman—a stranger—rushes into the frame and says, "This is all staged." Lila's response to the intruder is devastating; it goes beyond eloquence. And at last, in the street, she loses her strength, unable to move. *Why my son?* As everyone who's been through the experience says, nothing can console a parent for the death of a child. And when death is robbed of meaning, and tinged with betrayal, the pain flows over the lip of ordinary grief and engulfs us all.

"Fahrenheit 9/11" has a kind of necessary shock value: it reveals the underside of the war, the bloody messes not shown on news broadcasts. Moore makes use of footage given to him by American and foreign cameramen—scenes of Americans who were blown apart near Baghdad, or of maimed and nerve-shattered men trying to put their



*In "Fahrenheit 9/11," Moore presents a whirlwind of political charges, sinister implications, and derision.*

ISTVAN BANYAI

lives back together in a Washington hospital or at their home base. One soldier achieves a memorable clarity as he says, fighting pain and incapacity, that he's disgusted by the lying way the Republican Party conducts its business. However embroiled the movie becomes in the upcoming election, no attack can lessen the impact of these scenes or diminish the anger they create in the audience; Moore, for once, offers experience rather than attitudes, sharp immediate suffering rather than his usual exasperated nostalgia for, say, the good old days, when the unions were strong and the workingman was king. If the rest of the movie had been created with this kind of directness and force, Michael Moore would have made a masterpiece.

The great documentary filmmakers of today—Frederick Wiseman, Marcel Ophuls, and Andrew Jarecki (of "Capturing the Friedmans")—know that truth in an absolute sense is unattainable. It's not even imaginable. Who would validate it? Who could say that another interpretation besides the filmmaker's was out of the question? Movies are made by men and women, not by gods hurling thunderbolts of certitude. But the great documentary filmmakers at least make an attempt, however inadequate, compromised, or hopeless, to arrive at a many-sided understanding of some complex situation. Michael Moore is not that kind of filmmaker, nor does he want to be. He calls himself a satirist, but he's less a satirist than a polemicist, a practitioner of mocking political burlesque: he doesn't discover many new things but punches up what he already knows or suspects; he doesn't challenge or persuade an audience but tickles or irritates it. He's too slipshod intellectually to convince many except the already convinced, too eager to throw another treated log onto the fire of righteous anger.

Yet Moore has talent and mother wit, and he has become a significant figure in this culture—a shrewdly manipulative humorist-crank sticking pins in the hide of American self-esteem. The persona he offers to the camera is that of a commonsense man caught in the senseless machinery of capitalism. In such documentaries as "Roger & Me" and "Bowling for Columbine," Moore created a kind of negative utopia in which the strong and the rich enjoy a triumph marred only by the disruptive efforts of Moore himself—a discontented American Everyman who pads around with his heavy gut and his baseball cap and harasses powerful people by asking them literal-minded questions. Moore has turned pain-in-the-neck intrusiveness and self-dramatization into a political jester's provocation. In "Fahrenheit 9/11," he works his famous shtick one more time: in front of the Capitol, he stops congressmen who voted for the Iraq war and asks them if they would consider urging their sons and daughters to join the armed services. As polite as a wine steward, he holds out the recruiting literature. Most of the congressmen skitter away like water bugs.

This is first-rate mischief. But a lot of Moore's teasing comes off as tricky and too easy, or as motivated by a paranoia so engulfing that it has blocked out normal skepticism—his own and (if he has his way) ours, too. The ideological framework of "Fahrenheit 9/11" goes roughly like this: America is not a democracy; America is an oligarchy in which the wealthy pull the strings behind a façade of manufactured democratic consent. The Bush clan rigged the national election in 2000; still, the new Administration was failing until 9/11, an event that the President exploited to create an atmosphere of endless fear and a practice of endless warfare. In the aftermath of the attacks, the White House allowed many Saudis, including twenty-four members of the bin Laden family, to fly out of the country after perfunctory questioning by the F.B.I. Why? Because the bin Ladens, along with the house of Saud itself, have been intimately connected for decades with the rise of the Bushes—funnelling money, in return for influence, into businesses controlled by the family or their friends. In brief, the republic has been bought. Moore implies that Afghanistan was invaded partly so that American oil interests could follow up on a deal arranged earlier with the Taliban to set up a natural-gas pipeline that would run through the country; Iraq was invaded so that military contracts would be pumped up and the Bushes' friends enriched. On the ground, the war is fought by an impoverished class created by the ruthlessness of capitalism—men and women who, faced with dim economic chances, have no choice but to "volunteer" for the armed services.

Saying that pieces of this are true—or partly true, or true when joined to counterclaims (isn't the Army mostly a boon for the working class?)—doesn't settle the journalistic issue. The movie's more radical allegations, which arrive like a shower of poison darts, are impossible to sort out and evaluate. On the Bush connections with the Saudis, for instance, Moore takes a line similar to that of Craig Ungar in his recent book, "House of Bush, House of Saud," but Ungar cites his sources in footnotes, and you can check up on him if you want to. Moore uses documents here and there, but much of the movie is too enraged and malicious to offer proof. "Was it all just a dream?" Moore asks at the beginning, reviewing the past four years, which have taken on the character of an ominous hallucination—so ominous that most of us, he believes, can't quite wrap our minds around it. To jolt us out of complacency, he depends on an editing method of flat-out contradiction—say, a Donald Rumsfeld claim of "humanitarian" bombing followed by shots of an Iraqi family's home destroyed by bombs. Is Rumsfeld's insistence that we have killed as few civilians as possible refuted by this heart-wrenching juxtaposition? No, it's neither proved nor disproved. Moore also gathers single shots together in volleys of didactic montage—for instance, Administration figures and Saudi ministers greeting one another fervently, or images of the President's men being made up before television appearances, a sequence implying that the Bush people are all in the grip of frivolous vanity. But this is cheap and meaningless. Everyone who goes on television gets made up.

Moore teases the powerful by playing them off against cornball pop-culture archetypes—turning the Afghanistan war into a "Bonanza"-style TV Western in which Tony Blair appears in a ten-gallon hat. How much water will that joke hold? And is this joker *opposed* to the Afghanistan war? (In "Bowling for Columbine," Moore presented Bill Clinton's intervention against Milosevic's ethnic cleansing as a case of slaphappy American militarism.) Moore never talks about Islamic fundamentalism and training camps, obsessive anti-Westernism, or suicide terrorists and the difficulty of guarding against them; he never asks how the American government *should* conduct itself in a war against religious totalitarians. There are, apparently, no justifiable fears, only hysterical fears manipulated by the authorities, whose every act is purposive and conspiratorial. It doesn't seem to have occurred to Moore that people like Tom Ridge may simply not know what they're doing and are desperately trying to appear on top of the situation.

Moore can't resist amusing his campus and conspiracy-nut following, along with the gleeful sophomore in all of us, but, as the man said, when you aim at the king you had better kill him. At the moment, the stakes may be too high for shenanigans. "Fahrenheit 9/11" offers the thrill of a coherent explanation for everything, but parts of the movie are no better than a wild, lunging grab at a supposed master plan. Did Bush, as Moore implies, allow Osama bin Laden to survive because of American financial ties to Osama's protectors, the Taliban? (If so, the Pentagon war planners were part of the plot.) Moore is a genuine populist, but what he can't deal with is the unpleasant possibility that Bush, as people used to say of Nixon, has made a shrewd assessment of the lack of virtue and curiosity in the American public. A lot of Americans still admire the ignorant, smirking, chest-out, crotch-forward triumphalism. Michael Moore has become a sensational entertainer of the already converted, but his enduring problem as a political artist is that he has never known how to change anyone's politics. ♦

ON TELEVISION

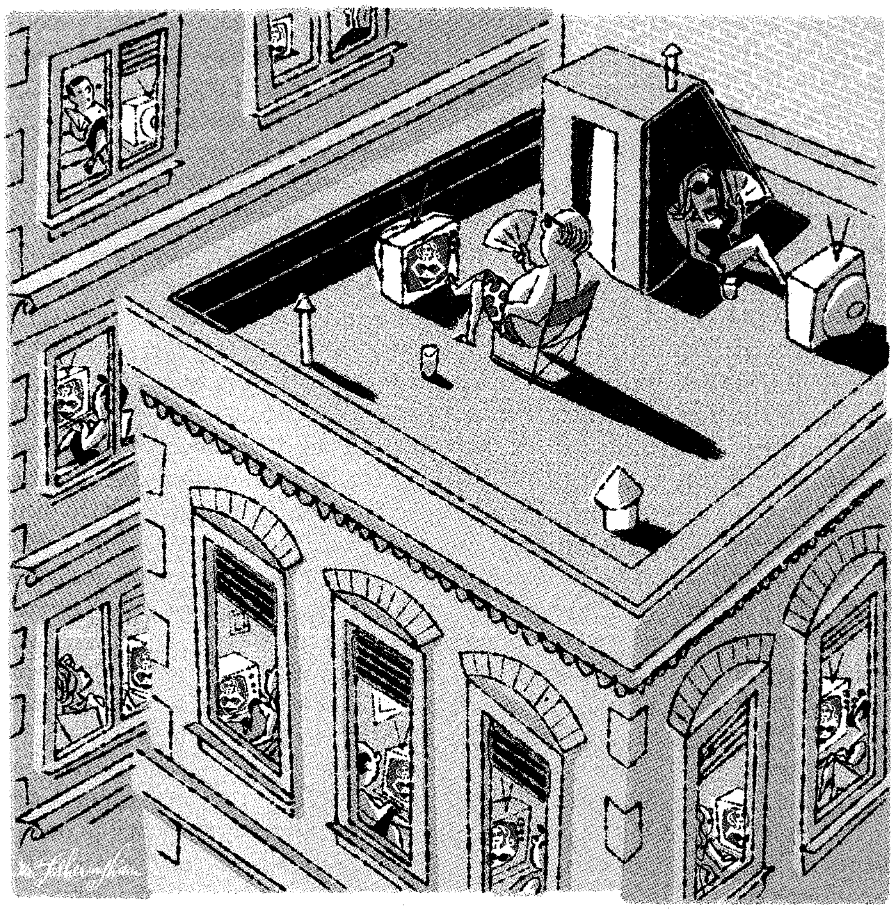
# THE FOX BOX

*The network cancels our summer vacation.*

BY NANCY FRANKLIN

Fox has changed the face of network television. What, you didn't get the press release? That's what it says: "SUMMER 2004: FOX CHANGES THE FACE OF NETWORK TELEVISION." The revolution—another word that Fox has been using to describe its extreme makeover of TV—happened last week. Maybe you do know that already, but I mention it anyway, just in case you've been preoccupied with the imminent handover of power in Iraq or busy wondering why you have no recollection of Ronald Reagan's Presidency making us "feel good about ourselves again," as the news anchors and commentators kept telling us it did during the weeklong coverage of his death and the memorial events that followed.

Fox's earthshaking efforts have been focussed primarily not on giving us better shows—you silly!—but on instituting a new programming schedule. It has scrapped the traditional network practice of premièring new shows in September and October, and will now introduce them year-round; Fox will also start new seasons of existing shows at times that work around its broadcast of the major-league playoffs and the World Series, in October, and of its tent-pole hit "American Idol." Last week, the network kicked things off in a big way, premièring five new shows—one drama ("North Shore"), two comedies ("Quintuplets" and "Method & Red"), and two reality series ("The Casino" and "The Simple Life 2:



*Seasonal affective disorder: the lazy days of summer viewing are a thing of the past.*

EDWARD FOTHERINGHAM

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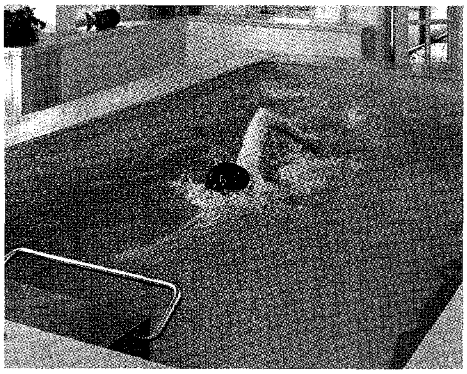

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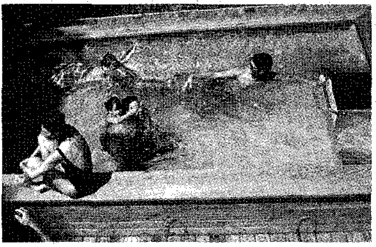

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Road Trip"). "North Shore" and "The Casino" run back-to-back on Monday nights; the other shows make up the 8:30-10 P.M. slot on Wednesdays, prompting Fox to hopefully label the evening "The Big Funny," which is practically like delivering a shotgun, a barrel, and some fish to your doorstep. Fox has been moving in this direction for some time, as have most of the other networks, and the formula seems to work: CBS introduced "Survivor" in the summer of 2000, NBC débuted "Fear Factor" the following summer, and Fox launched the "American Idol" juggernaut in the summer of 2002.

Networks have a lot to gain by switching away from traditional seasons, and viewers do, too, since new shows are easier to check out when they come in small doses. It's impossible for a normal person who has any kind of life to see all the shows that début in the fall, and within a couple of weeks it can be too late, since shows not infrequently get cancelled after just two or three episodes. But something has happened to summer in the process. Reruns are disappearing from the landscape; soon you'll no longer have the chance to see that episode of your favorite show which you missed because your tango class interfered, and you won't happen to catch a show that you ignored during the regular season, and that turns out to be good. A less obvious loss is the pleasant drowsiness of summer TV; in summers past, even if you liked TV, you could take it or leave it, and when you did turn the set on you weren't bombarded by all that newness. The nothingness of summer TV gave you something to look forward to in the fall. (Still, I *can* see why nothingness, as an argument for the old way, doesn't exactly sell itself to the networks.)

As it turns out, Fox has largely fulfilled my desire for summer nothingness with its revolution, though not in the way I would wish. My mind won't wander aimlessly and happily while I'm watching its June offerings; it will simply grind to a halt and shut down. The soapy, Aaron Spelling-inspired drama "North Shore," set in a lush resort in Hawaii, primarily concerns the unfinished romantic business between two employees of the hotel, Jason and Nicole, who are played by Kristoffer Polaha and Brooke Burns, a "Baywatch" alum. Jason, the hotel's general manager, doesn't know that Nicole has been hired at the hotel until he sees her walking down the main staircase with the hotel's owner (James Remar), in a shot that calls to mind Rhett's watching Scarlett ascend the stairs at Twelve Oaks. The parallels end there, though; I don't recall anyone in "Gone with the Wind" saying, as an alluring underage guest says to a lifeguard in this show, "I'm going to Waikiki to get a bikini wax later. Do you want to meet me after your shift's over?" The same nympho gets the pilot's best line; still trying to push herself on the forbearing lifeguard, she says, "Haven't you heard? Fifteen is the new twenty-one."

Which brings us to "The Simple Life 2: Road Trip," in which Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie demonstrate that twenty-three and twenty-two are the new fifteen. I have given up trying to send telepathic messages about deportment and responsibility through my TV to these two post-adolescent nincompoops and have accepted them for the untrainable house pets they are. They set, and kept, the bar so low in the first installment of the show, six months ago, that this time, as they drive from Florida to California in a pink pickup truck attached to an Airstream trailer and try to pay their way by (briefly) taking jobs as they go, you're inordinately impressed with them when they prove to be competent at anything—or interested in anything—for more than thirty seconds. In the show's first season, the Teflon twosome were unspeakably rude to their hosts, who didn't know where their guests were coming from—who does, really?—but this time around everyone they encounter seems to be in on the joke, and their misadventures play as fairly innocent screwball comedy. It becomes funnier and funnier to watch them get their way everywhere they go. When they run out of money, they just ask some hapless man for it, and invariably he gives it to them; they know how to turn on the charm just long enough—sometimes all it takes is a few seconds—to make the day of any boy or man they come across, and to literally charm the pants off one of them.

The sitcom is a dormant genre at the moment, and "Quintuplets" and "Method & Red" won't do anything to wake it up. In "Quintuplets," Andy Richter stars as a father of five, in what must be the first sitcom based on the successful use of fertility drugs, and it is painful to watch this extremely likable performer try to squeeze himself into such a clanging, unroadworthy vehicle, especially after having made a much better show just a couple of years ago, "Andy Richter Controls the Universe" (which Fox cancelled), where the humor had to do with what was inside Richter's head, not with the dictates of a laugh track. His three boys and two girls are fifteen, and I'm sure you will be shocked when I tell you that one of the girls is blond and not very bright and popular and the other has brown hair and glasses and doesn't expose her midriff and is not popular. (The boys don't escape the stamp of cliché, either.)

Witless writing—but at least with a few turns of phrase that rise above the basement level—also marks "Method & Red," a baggy-pants rehashing of "The Beverly Hillbillies," starring the hip-hop artists Method Man and Redman as inhabitants of an affluent white suburb. The show spends a lot of time making visual jokes about the fellows' new wealth—water coolers filled with champagne, hot tubs, flat-screen TVs in the fridge and in the cutlery drawer—but "Method & Red" has no more of a point of view than MTV's "Cribs" does, except when it comes to white people. For every white stereotype you can think of, the show has a character to personify it—karmic payback, perhaps, for "Amos 'n' Andy."

The most interesting of the new Fox shows is "The Casino," another Mark Burnett reality show. "The Casino" follows two dot-com millionaires, Tim Poster and Tom Breitling, as they try to carry out their plan of buying the Golden Nugget casino in downtown Las Vegas and restoring its old-school tone. Unlike Burnett's "Survivor" and "The Apprentice," the show isn't a contest, and so it lacks a certain tension; unfortunately, it also lacks verisimilitude. The creators of reality shows have come to prefer the term "unscripted," but as the genre has developed both terms have come to be less applicable. In the first episode of "The Casino," the camera follows a known card counter around the casino floor and up to his room with a female companion (who turns out not to be female), with his full knowledge; at the same time that he's being filmed playing blackjack, employees are being filmed watching him on surveillance cameras. All this has to be prearranged; so any surprises are strictly prefabricated. Intercut with this drama are scenes of a group of fraternity buddies who have come to the casino to show one of their shy friends a good time, if you know what I mean. The pacing of the pilot seemed off, and now I know why: after it aired, I read that Fox had reëdited all the episodes and taken out the naughtiest bits, only hints of which remain in the pilot, in order to avoid being spanked by the Federal Communications Commission—the agency that is currently starring in its own reality series, "Washington Squares." ♦

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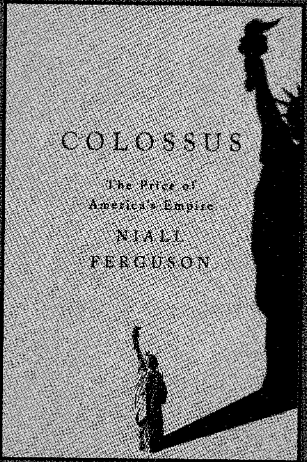

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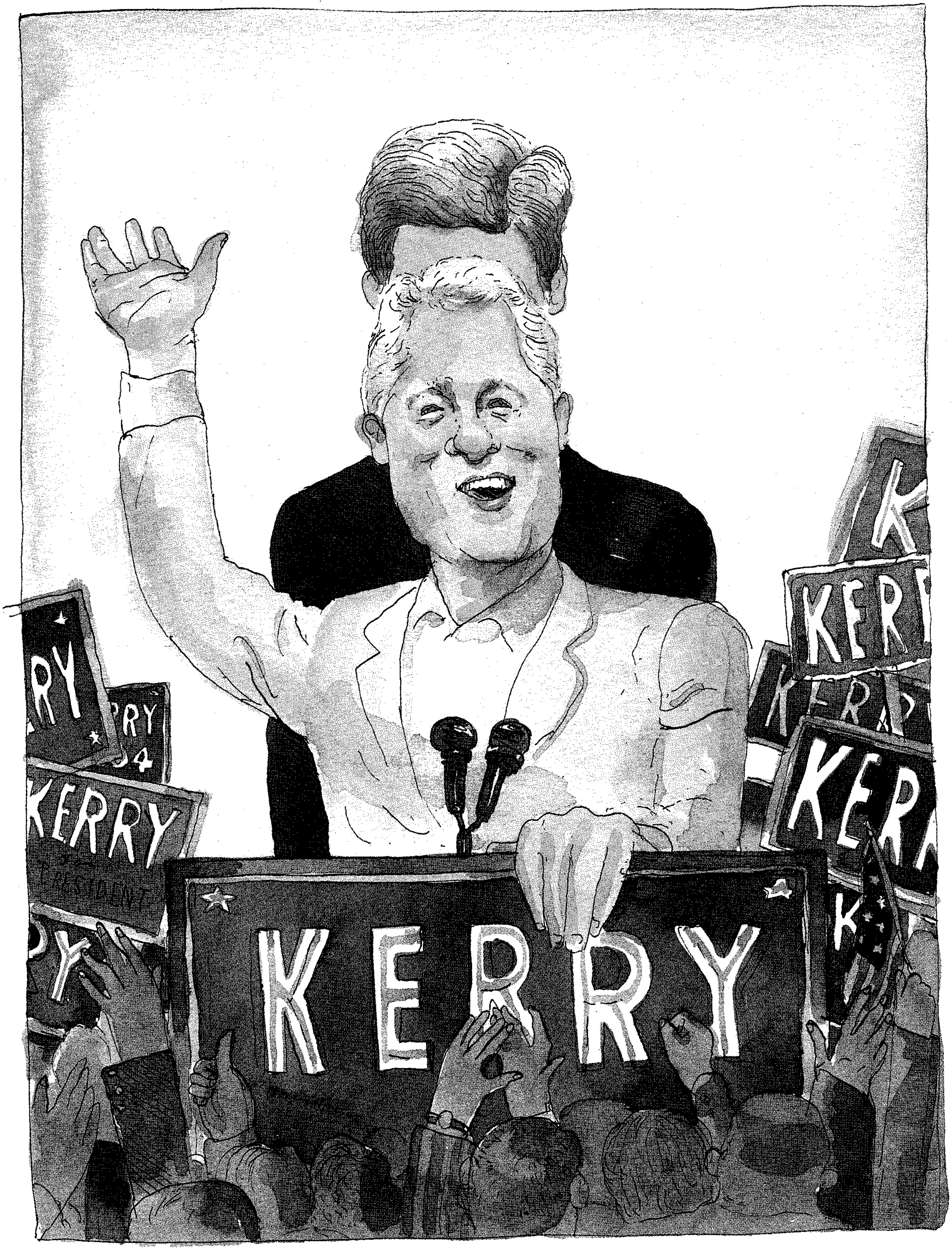
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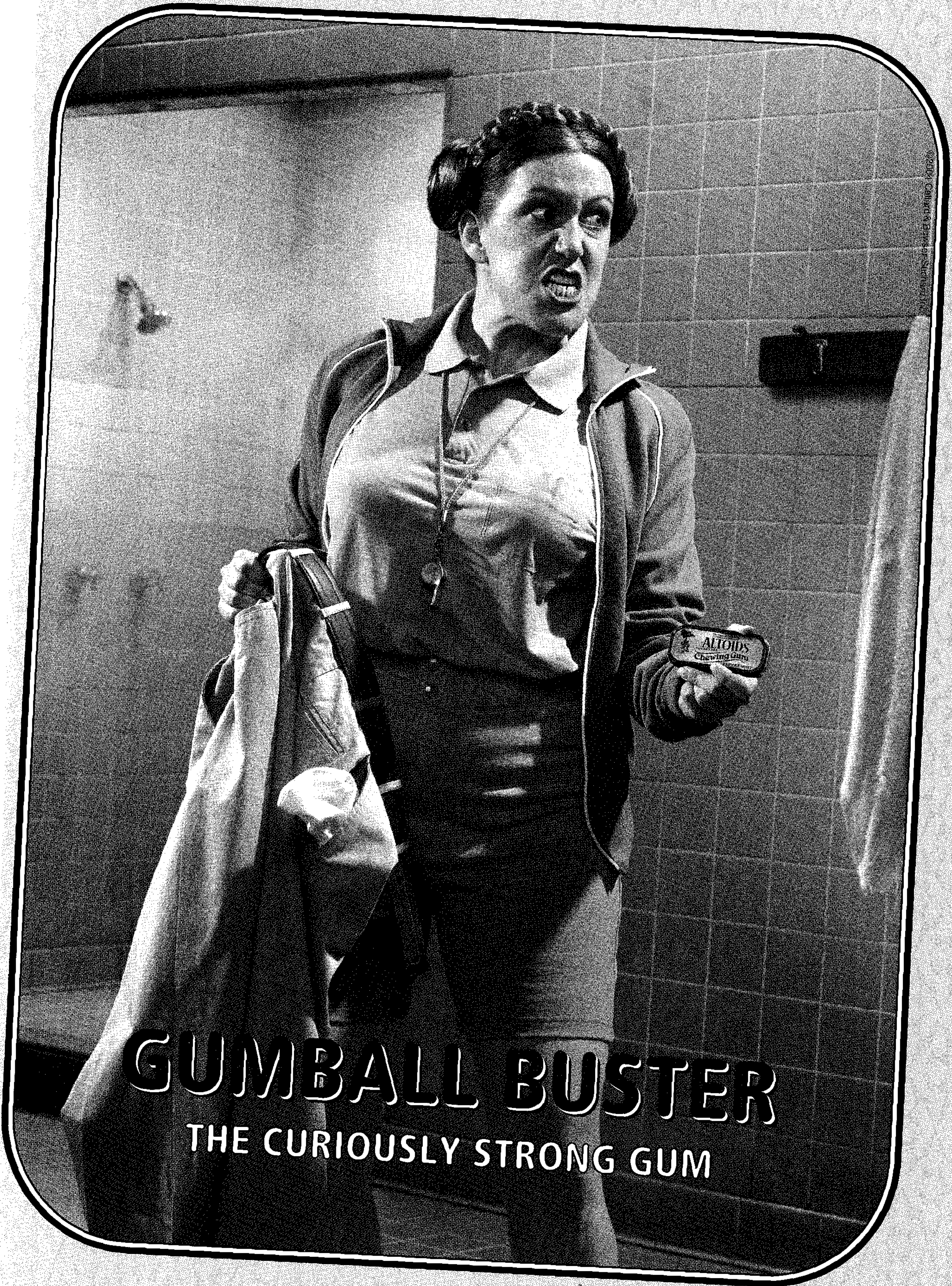
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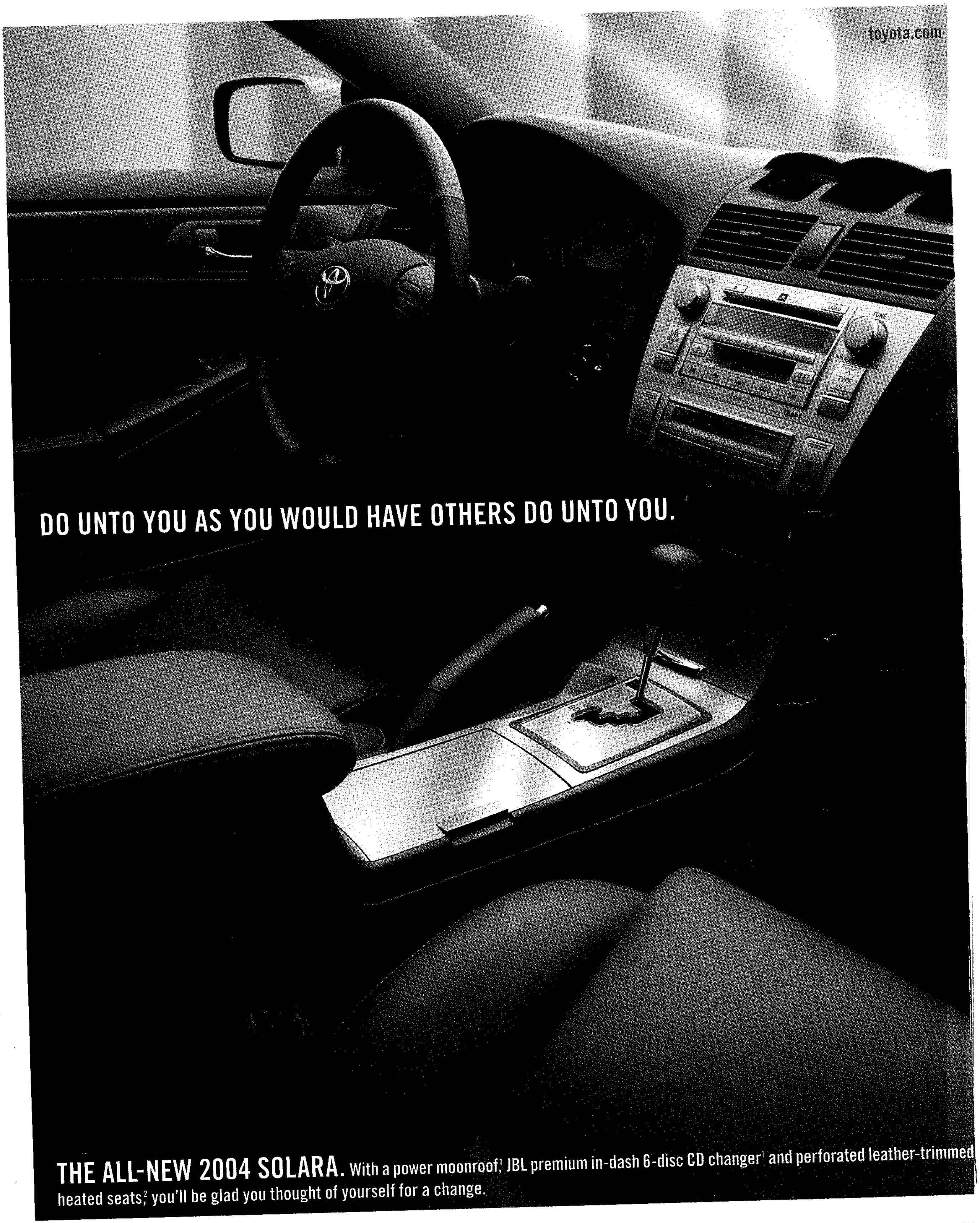
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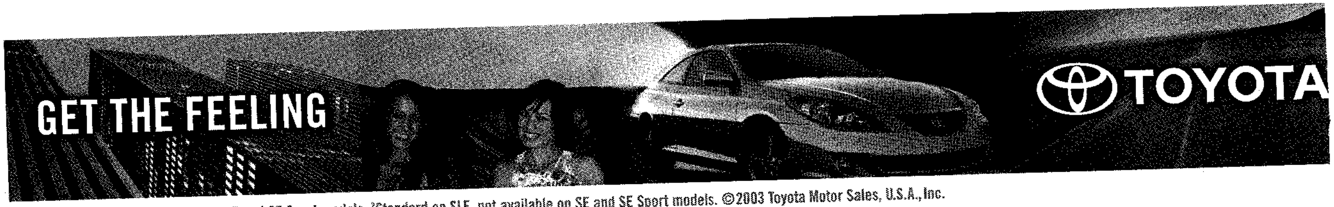
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